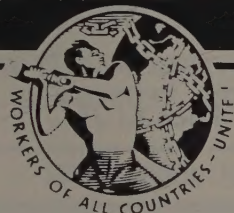


# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL



VOL. XV

No. 9

## **THE JAPANESE WARMONGER GETS A THRASHING**

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By ERNST FISCHER

### **NEUTRALITY IN THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES**

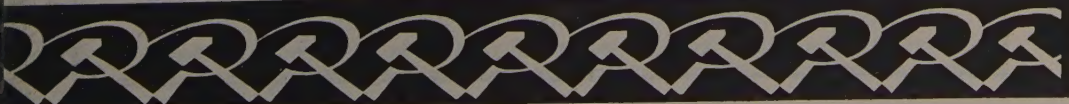
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## The Warmonger Gets a Thrashing

**T**HE insolent Japanese militarists have experienced a well-deserved defeat on the frontier of the Soviet Union. Incited by their "axis brothers," the Japanese imperialists made a foolhardy attempt to throw down a challenge to the Soviet Union. Thanks to the resolute attitude of the Soviet government the fascist warmongers will have good cause to remember this particular act of provocation on their part and will not so easily forget Lake Khasan and the Hill of Changkufeng. They have made known to the whole world the weakness and infamy of Japan on the one hand, the unshakable strength and integrity of the Soviet Union on the other.

On July 20 the Japanese Ambassador, Sigemitsu, called upon Comrade Litvinov, the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and in the name of the Japanese government demanded a slice of territory in the region of Lake Khasan.

Comrade Litvinov replied that the right of the Soviet Union to this territory was beyond dispute and was confirmed by the Hung-Chung Agreement and the maps attached to it. To the impudent demand that the Soviet Union should withdraw its troops from a section of its own territory, Comrade Litvinov replied:

"Unlike other states the Soviet Union does not maintain its armies in order to dispatch them to foreign countries, but exclusively for the defense of its own frontiers. The Red Army is fully conscious of its responsibility for the inviolability and unassailability of those frontiers, and that responsibility inspires all its actions. Quiet reigns all along the frontier, and it can only be disturbed from the Japanese-Manchurian side; the Japanese, moreover, will have to bear

the responsibility for the consequences arising out of its disturbance."

Sigemitsu, who was unable to produce any arguments in support of the demands of the Japanese government, adopted a threatening attitude and declared that Japan would "be driven to the conclusion that force must be employed."

Whereupon Comrade Litvinov retorted calmly:

"As regards the employment of force, Your Excellency must know, if he considers it expedient diplomacy to employ such threats and such methods of intimidation, to which some states do indeed yield, that in Moscow the employment of such can meet with no success."

The fascist robber states have become accustomed to intimidating other governments by the threats of force and to achieving success by the use of blackmail. In Moscow such methods are of no avail. An American correspondent stated in a message to his paper that Litvinov had in effect answered the Japanese Ambassador in the following terms: "You are under a misapprehension, my dear sir; you are not in London, but in Moscow. You are not talking to English diplomats but to the Soviet government."

The Soviet government desires to maintain peace, it seeks no quarrel with its neighbors, but woe to those neighbors if they confuse the calm, peaceable might of the Soviet state with weakness. The Japanese militarists made an attack on the Soviet Union with intent to stir up trouble and fancied they could get off scot-free. In the region of Lake Khasan, however, they have had an op-



portunity of convincing themselves of the contrary.

The attack carried out by the Japanese generals is, nevertheless, not to be explained solely by their wrong estimate of the Soviet Union. The Japanese militarists embarked on this adventure because Japanese imperialism and its fascist allies are faced with increasing difficulties, the former in China, the latter in Europe.

On July 8 a year had passed since the Japanese invasion of China. The "military walk-over" of Japanese militarism has been transformed into a long drawn-out war, which increasingly demands the exertion of all Japan's forces. The hope of a speedy victory is more and more thrust into the background by the disappointment resulting from the military defeats inflicted upon the Japanese conquerors by the united forces of the heroic Chinese people.

On July 18 two years had passed since the beginning of the war organized in Spain by Italian and German fascists. The admirable heroism with which the Spanish people has defended its country against the invading armies of German and Italian fascism has, despite their military and technical superiority, completely upset the plans of the interventionists. On July 26 there took place that great offensive of the Republican Army on the Ebro which put a sudden end to the hopes of Hitler and Mussolini and thwarted the pro-fascist schemes of Chamberlain. Despite the threats of German fascism, despite the growing pressure of the English government and their French fellow-conspirators, Czechoslovakia remains firm, betraying no inclination to capitulate, to set aside the pact of friendship with the Soviet Union and democratic France and submit to Hitler Germany.

This state of affairs, as might be expected, gave rise to a desire on the part of the German fascists and also of some English imperialists to launch an offensive in the Far East which should act as a diversion, in order to awaken in Europe the impression that the Soviet

Union was tied up on the Manchurian frontier and could not throw her full weight into the scales in the West. These calculations on the part of the European fascist aggressors coincided with the hopes of the Japanese militarists that they might compensate for the complete fiasco in China by starting a war with the Soviet Union. They were buoyed up, no doubt, with hopes of finding a way out of the impasse by embarking upon a great adventure, a war against the Soviet Union with the aid of the other "axis" powers.

At any rate, Berlin was fully informed as to what was going on in the Far East. On July 30 the following revealing paragraph appeared in the Berlin *Börsenzeitung*:

"Prolonged consultations have occurred in Tokio between the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Minister of Finance, the War Minister, the Chief of the General Staff and the Chief of Operations. A report is made daily to the Emperor. Japan proposes, if all the steps taken in Moscow prove unsuccessful, first of all to stage a demonstration, which shall at least convince the local Red commanders that it would be better to evacuate the occupied territory before the combined forces of Japan and Manchukuo proceed to the extreme counter-measures which it is in their power to take."

On the night of July 31 Japanese troops, employing artillery, attacked the Soviet frontier posts, occupied the Hill of Changkufeng and penetrated four kilometers into Soviet territory. But within a very short space of time they were repulsed by detachments of the Red Army.

On August 2 before daybreak, the Japanese troops launched a fresh attack on the Hill of Changkufeng; after a stubborn engagement, which lasted the whole day, they were once more driven off after suffering heavy casualties. Artillery and airplanes were employed on a large scale. The Red Army cleared the Soviet soil of the bandits, but kept

strictly within the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

On August 4 the Japanese Ambassador once more called on Comrade Litvinov and declared that his government was inspired only by "pacific" motives and wished to settle the "incident" peaceably.

Comrade Litvinov replied it would be ironical to refer to the military attack and the night sortie on the Soviet frontier guard, in the course of which artillery had been employed, as a "peaceful" act. He declared quite bluntly:

"If the Japanese cease their attacks and their firing on Soviet territory and recall such of their troops as are still on Soviet territory, the Soviet troops will have no grounds for proceeding with military counter-measures and the Soviet government will be ready to enter into a diplomatic discussion of any proposals which the Japanese government may wish to make. But the unassailability of the Soviet frontier, the delimitation of which was laid down in the Hung-Chung Agreement and the attached maps, must be guaranteed beforehand."

When the Japanese Ambassador expressed the wish of the Japanese government to negotiate with regard to the Hung-Chung Agreement and the demarcation of the frontier, he was met with the categorical answer:

"The frontiers between states are determined exclusively by international agreements and maps, not by subjective views and wishes of governments and military circles or unofficial statements. To the official documents submitted by the Soviet government no answer has been made on the part of the Japanese government other than the declaration that it desires a fresh demarcation of the frontier.

"The frontier between the U.S.S.R., Manchukuo and Korea can only be that which has been established by agreements concluded with the Chinese government and the maps attached thereto. The occupation of Manchuria by Japan does not give the latter power the right to demand a change of frontier. In any

case the Soviet government has not given its consent to a fresh demarcation of the frontier and will not give it. The Soviet troops, however, will not suffer the presence of foreign troops on even a small strip of territory which they regard as indisputably theirs."

The Japanese found themselves hoisted with their own petard. They attempted once more to get their way by force of arms and again proceeded to attack on August 5 with the object of seizing a strip of Soviet territory. The vehement counter-attack of the Soviet troops nevertheless dealt them so severe a blow that even their allies in Berlin and Rome were discomfited.

As early as August 4 the Hitler-German *Frankfurter Zeitung* published a message from Tokio:

"Responsible military circles make no secret of how undesirable is the present development of the frontier incident at this moment when energetic preparations are being made for the taking of Hankow."

The Italian papers also expressed profound disquietude. The Far Eastern "axis brother" had already lost a great deal of his value for Hitler and Mussolini when he reached an impasse in China, and the clash with the military power of the Soviet Union now revealed to them the complete weakness of their Japanese ally.

The Hitler-German Foreign Minister gave the Japanese ally clearly to understand that while Germany, it was true, supported "morally" the impudent act of aggression in the Far East, she was not for the moment in the position to give material expression to this support. Even the Hitler-German warmongers did not venture to challenge directly the mighty power of the Soviet Union; they egged on the little Japanese "axis brother," while they for their part increased the pressure on Czechoslovakia, but, in view of the unshakable determination of the Soviet Union, they avoided going to the aid of the "Prussia" of the East.



The act of provocation had failed. The Soviet Union had demonstrated its unshakable power to the whole world. The Japanese, who had not succeeded in getting the chestnuts out of the fire but had merely burned their fingers, could see for themselves what a mess they had made of their adventure. Once more, on August 9, the Japanese troops had vainly attacked the Hill of Changkufeng; not only were they compelled to withdraw, but they finally lost all desire to proceed with their campaign of provocation.

Obviously, the Japanese government was thoroughly scared and wished to retreat at all costs from the precipice which opened before it. Sigemitsu was once more rapidly given instructions to visit Comrade Litvinov and on August 10 he was obliged to accept in substance the proposals of the Soviet Union.

After this defeat the Japanese found themselves obliged to cease military operations and to submit to further settlement of the dispute to a mixed commission of Soviet and Japanese representatives. The terms of the task confronting this commission were laid down in the declaration of Comrade Litvinov which was accepted by the Japanese Ambassador on August 7.

"The redemarcation of the frontier must be carried out exclusively on the basis of existing international agreements. The Hung-Chung Agreement has been put forward by the Soviet government and this alone can be used as a basis unless any later agreement concluded between Russia and China is produced by Manchukuo or Japan. But no such later agreement exists. No other document can have any effect on the delimitation of the frontier."

As a result of the calm resolution of the Soviet Union, its political and military superiority, the Japanese campaign of aggression has ended disastrously. Japan stands revealed to the world as a warmonger, and, what is still worse, a warmonger who has been given a good thrashing.

The Soviet Union has once more given proof that it desires peace and not war,

that it will, however, defend peace with the utmost resolution and permit no aggressor to lay hands on the frontiers of the socialist state. It has saved peace on its frontier and thereby performed the greatest possible service for world peace.

\* \* \*

The war triangle, Berlin-Rome-Tokio, systematically undermines and endangers world peace. The three fascist aggressors pursue a joint plan of dividing up the world anew, and set themselves the task of compelling other nations to bow beneath the fascist yoke. They have surrounded themselves with a mythical aura of irresistibility, woven of their brazen propaganda and the cowardice of the democratic governments. They have achieved success by intimidation and blackmail, and each of their successes has given a new breach in world peace.

The defenders of world peace, nevertheless, are rising up to oppose them with increasing strength. It is the people of Spain, the people of China, that put ever greater obstacles in their path, that leap into the breach and, weapon in hand, defend peace. All other democratic peoples feel bound to them by the closest ties, but there are governments in some of the democratic countries which prevent them from encircling the fascist aggressors with a vast ring of peace and compelling them to abandon their war schemes.

In their struggle for peace the peoples look with ever greater hope and admiration toward the Soviet Union, where people and government are united, where the government incorporates nothing but the will of the people. In vast mass demonstrations which have swept the whole country the Soviet people has proclaimed its passionate and unshakable determination to defend the socialist fatherland against all aggressors.

At its second session the Supreme Soviet, reflecting the socialist patriotism of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., raised the appropriation for national defense from 17,000,000,000 to 27,000,000,000 rubles and simultaneously, by the increase of all



other items in the budget, gave convincing expression to the inexhaustible strength of the Soviet state.

The whole world has felt the repercussions of the blow which the fascist warmonger received on the Far Eastern frontier of the Soviet Union. It has sent an ominous shudder through the warmongering allies of the Japanese aggressor; it has, like a thunderstorm, cleared the atmosphere and sent a current of fresh air to the peoples of the world.

The people of China, which has checked the Japanese advance and is with all its forces defending Hankow, has drawn fresh strength and confidence in the successful outcome of its struggle from Japan's defeat on the frontier of the Soviet Union.

The people of Spain, which drove back its assailants over the Ebro and proclaimed its unimpaired power of resistance, has realized anew the vulnerability of the fascist warmongers. The people of Czechoslovakia, which shows itself determined to capitalize neither before the war threats of Hitler Germany nor the intrigues of English diplomacy, is aware, in its grievous situation, of the relief of political tension brought about by the failure of the fascist provocation in the Far East.

More clearly than ever before is the true relation between the strength of the bombastic fascist *provocateurs* and the socialist Hercules perceptible. This is

a source of fresh encouragement to all friends of peace in their struggle against the war danger. It is a fresh lesson for all nations that a policy, not of yielding, but only of unswerving resolution can set at nought the plans of the fascist warmongers.

An impudent attack made by the fascist triangle on world peace has failed. The fascist marauders received a sound thrashing, but nevertheless they will not shrink from further attacks. Indubitably they will pursue their criminal machinations wherever possible, wherever the mass movement for peace has not become a really serious obstacle in the path of fascism; they will not shrink from fresh acts of provocation, but will attempt to carry into effect their plans for the enslavement of free peoples and their entanglement in a new world war.

The democratic, anti-fascist movement of the masses throughout the world must be a firm rock against which the attacks of the fascist warmongers will founder. The greatest possible unity of the masses and above all of the working class in the struggle against war and fascism must be achieved, so that their superior forces may prevent the fascists from stirring up a new world war.

The Soviet Union has shown how peace can effectively be defended and warmongers be compelled to demonstrate their weakness and infamy. The peoples of the whole world will always have before their eyes that great example.

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## Intervention and Non-Intervention

A DISTINGUISHED foreigner has arrived in Czechoslovakia, Lord Runciman, who was immediately christened "Lord Castor Oil" (untranslatable pun) by the Czech people.

The noble lord is an envoy of Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of Britain and the persistent champion of "non-intervention." He has come to Prague in order to interfere with the domestic affairs of Czechoslovakia and to work out an expert opinion on the insolent demands put to the Czech government by Konrad Henlein.

The intervention of the Chamberlain clique in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia is an exact counterpart of their "non-intervention" in the affairs of Spain. It is the same policy under a different name, the policy of supporting the fascist aggressors in their attacks on the freedom and the peace of the nations. Spain has already been overrun by the fascist robbers. Hence Chamberlain is for "non-intervention" in order not to cramp the style of the invaders. In Czechoslovakia no invasion could as yet be staged. Hence Chamberlain is for intervention, in order to stack the cards in favor of the fascist burglars. The policy of intervention is designed to open the frontiers for the fascists, the policy of "non-intervention" is designed to close the frontiers to the anti-fascists and prevent assistance from reaching the victims of aggression. This is the "peace policy" of Chamberlain, the policy of the most reactionary circles of the British ruling class who regard every struggle for freedom as a revolt against the "moral order" of the British Empire, who pamper the fascists in order to threaten the Soviet Union and to turn France into an obedient vassal, who are prepared to

"hand over" Czechoslovakia as Austria was handed over in order to satisfy the appetite of their fascist police dogs. Adolf and Benito are to gorge themselves on the meat of other nations in order that they may not snap at the British beef-steak and that they may snarl at "Bolshevism" instead of at their British tamer.

It was due to the policy of Chamberlain that Austria was swallowed up by Hitler Germany. True, the prey is giving the beast of prey serious indigestion. But Czechoslovakia is not showing the slightest inclination to allow herself to be thrown to the German fascists by Mr. Chamberlain. When on May 21 Hitler ordered his troops to march into Czechoslovakia, he came up against an invincible resistance. Seeing the firm attitude of Czechoslovakia and the unshakable fidelity of the Soviet Union to her international pacts, the French government decided to fulfill her obligations towards her allies and the British government was compelled to whistle back its German police dog at the last moment. The mighty movement of resistance among the Czechoslovak people and the firm attitude of the Czech government at the last moment prevented at the eleventh hour a war which had almost begun already. To the greatest fury of Hitler and the most profound discomfort of Chamberlain the nations were given the opportunity of convincing themselves that fascist attacks are abandoned if the democratic powers offer a united opposition to them.

Therefore Hitler and Chamberlain had recourse to other methods in order to vanquish Czechoslovakia. They spare no effort to disorganize Czechoslovakia from inside and put her under pressure



from outside in order to drive her out of her system of alliances. If they succeed in cutting up the Czechoslovak republic into "autonomous" districts and in forcing it to give up the pacts with France and the U.S.S.R., Hitler's game would be as good as won. He could then without incurring any serious risk attack the weakened and isolated Czechoslovakian republic and from Prague dictate his law to all the nations of the Danube valley. That this is the stake in the game and not the "national emancipation" of the Sudeten Germans has been admitted even by a Conservative British newspaper. The Berlin correspondent of the *Daily Express* reported to his paper on July 26 what he had learned on good authority in Berlin concerning the demands of Hitler:

"First, Hitler will not accept any solution of the Czech problem unless Czechoslovakia agrees to cancel her defensive alliances with France and Russia.

"He is determined to force Czechoslovakia to subordinate her foreign policy to Germany's, to make his neighbor virtually a vassal state.

"Secondly, Hitler considers Czechoslovakia as the key to his scheme for a German commonwealth of nations. . . .

"Nazi leaders realize that it is difficult for the Czech government to commit national suicide by cutting their military ties with Paris and Moscow, and to put themselves under Germany's wing.

"It is pointed out, however, that if they should refuse the foreign policy demands of Germany they will not be able to live in peace."

The wishes of Hitler Germany are clear enough. In order to give more emphasis to these wishes, Konrad Henlein, the gymnastics instructor representing German fascism in Czechoslovakia, has to describe the national minority statute proposed by the Czechoslovakia government as unacceptable and frustrate the negotiations by making provocative demands. In order to implement these wishes, Mr. Chamberlain gets his French twin brother, M. Flandin, to carry on an intrigue directed against the pacts with

the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. In order to implement these wishes, the British and partly also the French governments are bringing increasing pressure to bear on the Czechoslovak government. By intervention of this kind the Czechoslovak government is to be driven into a position similar to that of Spain and turned into an object of so-called "non-intervention."

Comrade Gottwald, leader of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, in an excellent statement made to a French newspaper correspondent on the nationality statute, characterized this situation in the following terms:

"German fascism and its tool, the Henlein party, are trying to create the impression and to suggest that the threat to the peace of Europe arises from the inadequate settlement of the national minorities problem in Czechoslovakia. That is sheer deceit.

"The peace is threatened by the warlike aggressiveness of Hitler Germany which is directed against the independence and the very existence of Czechoslovakia and not by any national complications in the inner structure of our country.

"But it is an alarming fact that even certain groups in the Western democratic countries are accepting the sophisticated arguments of German Hitlerism and deliberately turning the national minority problem of Czechoslovakia into an issue of the peace of Europe and the pacification of Central Europe. Instead of taking steps, on the basis of collective security, against German Hitlerism as a disturber of the peace and a menace to the freedom of other nations, Czechoslovakia is being subjected to a special course of training in national minority policy and being required to perform all sorts of breakneck feats in connection with the minority statute as a proof of her good will. Czechoslovakia is being asked to go to the verge of suicide in order that the Western powers may promise her support and assistance in the difficult position in which she finds herself as a result of the aggressiveness of Hitler. Czechoslovakia is being subjected to pressure because she stands

so firm against Hitlerism. Thus her pleasure at the sympathy shown her by the nations of the democratic world after May 21 is turned into bitterness.

"The whole history of the national minority statute must be considered from this angle. Czechoslovakia is put into the position of a pupil who under the threat of the birch must solve a wrong problem. The problem is so incorrectly put that Czechoslovakia cannot solve it correctly even if she makes ever so great an effort. Are the pedagogues of the Western world aware of the fact that the granting of unlimited rights of national autonomy means the granting of such rights today to the enemies of the republic, to irredentist plotters and seditious tools of a foreign imperialist power which wishes to destroy Czechoslovakia? *Do they know that the granting of rights of autonomy to the followers of Henlein means giving Berlin dominant position in Czechoslovak territory and that national autonomy in the hands of the Henlein adherents is a dagger which they want to use to stab the republic in the back?*"

Lord Runciman has undertaken the job of carefully preparing this dagger and giving it a nice "democratic" sheath. But the decision lies neither with Lord Runciman nor with Mr. Chamberlain or any other specialist of intervention and "non-intervention"—the decision lies with the people and the government of Czechoslovakia. The unity of the people and the agreement of the government with the desire of the masses of the people to preserve their liberty are the strongest bulwarks of the Czechoslovak republic. This knowledge inspires the Czechoslovak people with ever greater strength and with an ever greater unity of purpose in defending its liberties and its country against open violence and secret machinations. In the ranks of all parties and organizations of Czechoslovakia there is a growing desire to set aside all differences of opinion and unite in the struggle for national independence. The leaders of the Communists, of the Social-Democrats, of the Benes party, of the Catholic Popular Party and leading members of other

parties have made statements showing this militant spirit.

"The decisive factor today remains the will of the people," wrote the *Lidove Noviny*, the leading bourgeois daily of Czechoslovakia. "No violence could subdue, and no intrigues will subdue us," cried Comrade Sverma, chief editor of the Communist *Rude Pravo* on August 1 addressing fifty thousand workers demonstrating on that day in Prague. Such is the spirit of the masses. It has found its most perfect expression in the statement of Comrade Gottwald quoted above. He said:

"The working people of Czechoslovakia will not permit the minority statute to be turned into any sort of surrender pact with Henlein or into a port of entry for the Trojan horse of Hitlerism into the Czechoslovakian republic."

The stronger the pressure that is brought to bear on Czechoslovakia, the closer is the unity of the Czechoslovak people and the less will that people tolerate the exclusion of any group from this unity, unless such a group itself stands aside and proves itself a traitor to the cause of the republic. To keep alive and strengthen this spirit of unity and determination, this spirit of May 21, is regarded by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia at present as its foremost task. In this the Party is meeting with increasing support from the masses and the other parties faithful to the republic. If this spirit is not lost but mightily asserted and developed, then the Berlin threats and London intrigues will fail and the specialists of intervention will not attain their goal. In the twilight of secret diplomacy Chamberlain and his friends among the French reactionaries may deceive their peoples for a time, but in the face of the clear resistance put up by Czechoslovakia to the fascist aggressors, in view of the fact that the defense of Czechoslovakia means the defense of peace in Europe against the fascist warmongers, the French and British peoples will not permit their governments to sacrifice the Czechoslovak Republic.



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## The Crocodile Tears of the People's Enemies

THE article of Comrade Dimitroff "Two Years of the Heroic Struggle of the Spanish People" \* as well as the greeting which the Executive Committee of the Communist International sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain on the same occasion have not only brought great annoyance to fascism and reaction. That would not be surprising. But they have also made them "mourn."

The *Frankfurter Zeitung*, the voice of the I.G. Dyestuffs (Chemical Trust), that industry in whose works poison gas is being feverishly produced for the coming totalitarian war, cannot get over the fact that the Spanish working class has treated the P.O.U.M., the Trotskyite spies of Franco and Hitler, according to their deserts. Apart from the fact, says the organ of the poison-makers, that Dimitroff "would like to fill the enemies of Franco . . . with new confidence by his appeal," he does not shrink from "recommending" to the Spanish working class movement "a further cleansing of their own ranks."

The expulsion of the P.O.U.M. provocators from the ranks of the working class movement has hurt the feelings of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. We can understand its pain. It was so prettily contrived. While Hitler and Mussolini let loose their intervention in hordes on the Spanish people, the Trotskyite P.O.U.M. was to disorganize defense and confuse the masses with "radical" phrases, engineer putsches and carry on espionage. It was so prettily contrived. But the vigilance of the Spanish workers tore away

the web and put a spoke in the calculations of the fascists.

The Spanish proletariat is great-hearted and selfless, but its charity does not go so far as to commit suicide for the love of Franco and Hitler. Its sharp hearing and keen-sightedness saw to it that the centers from which the P.O.U.M. dispatched important secret information to Franco were rendered harmless, the secret correspondence of the Trotskyites with the fascists seized, the haunts of the spies smoked out and the "revolutionary" agents of fascism put under lock and key. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* which has come down in the world under Goebbels, puts it as if it had the interests of the union of Franco's enemies at heart and as if they were complaining that Comrade Dimitroff was "disturbing" this union. It is true that the union of anti-fascist and peace forces is furthered by the exposure and expulsion of the Trotskyite abettors of fascism. The regret of the Frankfurt poison paper and the moans of the Italian fascist press about the "lot" of the Trotskyite P.O.U.M. spies show that the Spanish working class is on the right path when it destroys the Trotskyite "supports" of Franco, Hitler and Mussolini.

The *Bulletin Quotidien*, the organ of the arch-reactionary French Comité des Forges, wails that "Dimitroff lets no opportunity pass of attacking the political and trade union organizations of the Socialist International." The paper of the French heavy industry adds that neither the People's Front in France or elsewhere is "cemented" nor the organizational uniting of the two parties is "accelerated" by such tactics.

This care on the part of the French

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\* Also published as a pamphlet by Workers Library Publishers, New York. 3 cents.

heavy industry and its hacks is truly touching, but little convincing. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* of the German poison gas industry and its "arch-enemy" from French heavy industry stand unitedly by the wailing wall and, heart-broken, moan that Comrade Dimitroff "disturbs" the unity of the working class, the "cementing" of the People's Front and the union of the enemies of Franco. Behind the mask of honest folk the bitterest enemies of the People's Front and the working class bemoan the alleged "disturbance" in the ranks of their enemies; this provocation is too clumsy to deceive anyone. The workers, honest democrats and the friends of peace know very well *who* wants to achieve the unity of the people against war and fascism and who pays only lip service to it so as to deepen the split among the masses and thereby all the better to play the game of the warmongers.

It is also futile when the Goebbels press and certain French journalists, like MM. Dominique and d'Ormesson, who apparently only write French by mistake as in the construction of their French sentences it is not difficult to see the touch of Hitler German, try to falsify Comrade Dimitroff's words and turn them into—a call to war. Everyone who opens any newspaper finds news of Hitler's and Mussolini's intervention in Spain, of the massacre of the Spanish people by their armies, of their attacks on British ships. Everyone can judge for themselves as to who are the warmongers.

Who has let loose the war in Spain? The fascists. Who has attacked the great Chinese people? Military-fascist Japan, Hitler's and Mussolini's partner. Who broke into Ethiopia, murdering, plundering and pillaging? Mussolini. Who conquered Austria with the infantry, Gestapo, the S.A. and the S.S. (Nazi storm troopers), cannon, tanks and bombs? Hitler fascists. Who is daily threatening Czechoslovakia and is turning the frontier towns into armed camps? Hitler fascists.

These facts are known and cannot be

got rid of by any trickery, distortion or poisoning of the sources of information. In order not to allow the fascists continually to break the peace, conquer foreign countries and drench the land with the blood of the peoples, it is necessary to oppose them with energy, not to be taken by surprise by "foreign conquerors," or to give any ground and in good time to oppose to fascism "the forces of the united working class and the masses of the people gathered together in the anti-fascist Peoples' Front." *This* is the lesson which Comrade Dimitroff draws from the Spanish struggle. It is clear that this is in the interests of peace. This is making more and more headway and cannot be hidden by the angry howls of fascist paid hacks.

The maneuvers of reactionary and fascist organs of the press show how much the warmongers and imperialist politicians fear the urge of the masses towards unity in the fight against fascism and war. They know well that the passionate call of Comrade Dimitroff does not fall on deaf ears. It is strange therefore to find a Social-Democratic paper which speaks scornfully of Dimitroff's serious words. An editor of the *Paris Populaire* gets on his high horse and declares with exaggerated self-consciousness he would not like to take a history lesson from Dimitroff. Presumption does no good and the "glory" of not wanting to learn has up to now fallen to the share of the so-called "golden youth," i.e., the loafers of the big bourgeoisie. The proletariat and its advance guard renders homage to the virtue of learning.

It is no shame for a Social-Democrat to learn from Dimitroff. And if Dimitroff shows that the Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions adopt some good resolutions for the Spanish Republic and against "non-intervention," but that they do little to put these resolutions into force that is not just a "history lesson," but a necessary political statement with which not a few Socialists, and among them also some of the leaders of the big English trade unions, agree.



It would certainly be more worthy of a Socialist newspaper and more to the advantage of the fight for freedom of the Spanish people if the *Populaire* were to strengthen the fight against "non-intervention" rather than scoff at Dimitroff's "history lesson." It is to be hoped that the editors of the *Populaire* in their anxiety to score over the Communists will, at any rate, avoid approaching the

*Frankfurter Zeitung* or the *Bulletin Quotidien* too closely. When reaction puts out the slogan that Dimitroff "disturbs" the unity of the working class and the People's Front, Socialists should be vigilant enough not to fall immediately for this slogan. It is not the business of Socialists to catch up even one of the crocodile tears of the reactionary bourgeoisie.

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#### AGITATION AND PROPAGANDA

"Many of our comrades are inclined dangerously to underestimate the propaganda and agitation of our enemies. They regard questions of agitation and propaganda as secondary ones, and fail to understand that in the present situation it is precisely these questions which demand the most tremendous and concentrated attention. It is absolutely a decisive task facing all the Communist Parties, day in and day out, to carry on the propaganda of our ideas in a new way as against fascism, which is trying by every means, secretly or by open attack, to gain possession of the minds of the masses. *Propaganda and again propaganda*, utilizing literally every possibility to bring our ideas to the masses, to set our ideas against those of the fascists and reformists, so as to introduce the fresh breeze of our viewpoint into the atmosphere poisoned by fascism. . . ." — E. FISCHER, *More Agitation, More Propaganda*.

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## “Aryanizing” Fascist Italy

A GROUP of fascist “scholars” has explained in ten points the new attitude, as prescribed by Hitler, of Italian fascism to “race.” Originally the “scholars” proposed not to make themselves known but to publish their ten racial commandments anonymously, probably less out of professorial modesty than from a feeling of acute shame at having by order—or as their document has it, “under the aegis of the Ministry of National Culture”—to fly in the face of every tradition of the Italian people.

Completely without regard to historical facts and devoid of any sense of humor or irony, the “scholars” announce that the population of Italy is “of Aryan origin” and its culture “Aryan.” Like the Italian troops who had to learn the Prussian goose-step, the Italian people are undergoing Prussian “Aryanization,” and having their black hair bleached with racial dye.

There was a time when Mussolini made fun of Hitler’s racial lunacy. Speaking at Bari on September 6, 1934, he said:

“Thirty centuries of history entitle us to treat with disdain certain theories regarding the descent of men beyond the Alps, who being unacquainted with the art of writing were in no position to hand down to us knowledge of their existence at a period when Rome harbored Caesar, Virgil and Augustus.” (*Oeuvres et Discours de B. Mussolini*, French edition, Vol. X, p. 114.)

In his conversation with Emil Ludwig in 1932 Mussolini declared:

“There are no longer any pure races, for it is precisely by successful interbreeding that the great strength and beauty of a nation are developed. . . . I shall never believe it possible to prove

biologically that a race is more or less pure.”

The fascist mayflies, who pretend to the peoples that they found “thousand-year” regimes, change their “beliefs” very quickly. That which yesterday they assured us they would “never” believe, today they do believe “from the bottom of their hearts.”

Mussolini is today sailing in Hitler’s wake. In the long struggle over Austria Hitler has beaten Mussolini for the present. Hitler’s Germany is on the Brenner and Mussolini finds himself forced to take over the “theories” of his “axis” partner. Hitler commands, the Duce obeys, and science prostitutes itself in their service.

But the fact that Mussolini is now falling back upon the race theories fabricated in Germany has more basic causes. In an article published a few days before the Race Decree the Duce let fall the mask and showed whither he thinks to lead the Italian people: straight into a major war. In his introduction to the “Transactions of the Grand Council,” he wrote:

“It is the first time—but will it be the last?—that the Blackshirts have come out in the international field [i.e., in Spain—*Ed.*] against the forces of Bolshevism and of the ‘immortal principles’ [Mussolini means the principles of the French revolution—*Ed.*]. It is the meeting of the two revolutions, that of the last century . . . and ours. We do not know whether this encounter will have to be further developed tomorrow on a European or on a world scale. But what we do know is this, that fascism does not fear a struggle which must decide the fate of continents.”

Here is a shameless challenge to the democracies, of war to the death upon



the human rights won by the bourgeois French revolution. The axis wants to bring the peoples under its wheels, to force upon them its "laws" of chaos, barbarism and cannibalism. And this most enormous blood-letting is to take place in the name of "pure race," in the name of "pure blood."

Combined with the introduction of race is an anti-Semitic onslaught upon the Jews. Italy has 44,000,000 inhabitants, and among them are 44,000 Jews. For a thousand Italians there is *one* Jew. But the fascist knights of the rueful countenance have discovered that this dwindling Jewish minority constitutes a "terrible danger." The fascist power-mongers have such a low opinion of the Italian people which has produced a Dante, a Leonardo da Vinci, and a Garibaldi. Mussolini warns his heavily-armed Blackshirts that one must live "dangerously." He braces himself to lift the world out of the rut. And yet—how timid these fascist pseudo heroes are! If the people should whisper here or there the tiniest truth, it turns them as white as a sheet. If an insignificant, technically faulty, illegal paper appears, they become restless. The dictators of millions of human lives are afraid. They are conscious of the crimes they perpetrate against the people, and even in their dreams they are haunted by nightmares lest the masses rise and wreak vengeance. The cannibal anti-Semitism of fascism is a sign of its inward weakness.

Italian fascism is in difficulties. The harvest has failed, the much advertised "autarchy" is nothing but a regularized go-without policy, the currency vaults are emptying, the deficit is leaping sky-high, Ethiopia is not a goldmine but a source of uncertainty, and in Spain the Italian troops receive blow upon blow. The mood of the people is manifestly bad. The power-mongering of the fascists is deteriorating into scare-mongering. Hitler is expanding over the head of the Italian regime, he robbed it of the Austrian sphere of influence, he robbed it of the Balkans, and he sits on

its back and drives it on to ever fresh follies.

Mussolini feels the growing rancor of the people, who correctly consider his love services to Hitler as a betrayal of Italy, who curse the bloody war in Spain and set themselves instinctively against the growing pressure of German imperialism. Day by day their distaste mounts for the German invaders, the military technicians, economic advisers and Gestapo officials, who conduct themselves with more and more impertinence in Italy.

Fascism is now trying to sidetrack the resentment of the people by turning it against the Jews and the Catholics. In addition Mussolini, who finds himself under dire financial stress, has copied from his German allies the art of waging a shameless war of robbery under the cloak of anti-Semitism, describing firms as Jewish as an excuse for handing them over from their former owners to the fascist ringleaders. Lastly, he has realized that the old kind of Italian nationalism, which he used for winning the masses, is beginning, in view of the subjection of Italy to Hitler's Germany, to apply against himself, and so it seems to him advisable to pepper this Italian nationalism with "Aryan" racialism. For fear of the social and national disgust of the Italians with a dictator who has brought Italy low and converted her into a vassal of Hitler's Germany, Mussolini now throws himself into the arms of the cannibal anti-Semitism at which he jeered a few years back.

The peoples of all countries are now in a position to see the fascist "heroes" in all their nakedness. The fascist Schmellings knock out sucklings, the heavily-armed pounce upon defenseless Jews. Fear makes the fascists yet more brutal, more terroristic, more bestial. If the masses unite and do not capitulate to threats nor allow their governments to send help to the fascist cowards, then they will expose the inward weakness of fascism and make ready the end of the fascist rule of terror.

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## The Italian Race and the Catholic Flock

THE new "religion" of race and blood purity proclaimed by Italian fascism has greatly perturbed the mass of religious people in Italy. They are now able to see for themselves how completely fascism deprives personality of every vestige of dignity and imprisons it within the chains of totalitarianism. This new "religion" did not grow on Roman soil, but was delivered at the door free of charge by Hitler, apparently as "compensation" for being allowed to advance Germany's frontier as far as the Brenner. Mussolini is determined to compel the Italians to worship the idol of race.

For some time now the masses of the Catholics in Italy have been following with anxiety the "Hitlerization" of their country. The rape of Ethiopia did not open—as many naively expected—a period of prosperity, peace and cultural development, but a period of the most brutal persecutions of the people, a period of decline, of continually increasing misery, of chauvinist aggressiveness, of a vendetta against all honor and decency.

The thought of the "laurels" won by Hitler in his fight against the Catholics of Germany left the fascist rulers of Italy no peace. Hitler's systematic suppression of all freedom of belief and conscience was not only silently approved by the Italian fascist partners of the axis, but stimulated them to imitate it.

Bloodthirsty "fascists" of the first hour," members of the storm-troops (*squadristi*) whose acts of violence, arson and murder of workers and peasants can never be forgotten, found once again the purpose of their existence—to wreak vengeance, to trample culture underfoot and to stifle every human feeling. Mussolini himself opened the campaign with

the declaration that the fascists would deal with the Catholics "in their own style." He was followed by the notorious Farinacci, who day after day abused and threatened the Catholics in his paper *Regime Fascista*. And a threat by Farinacci is not mere words. The Italians remember very well the "heroic exploits" of this fascist gangster. They remember his "patrols" in the years 1921-1922, his attacks by night on peaceful villages which his storm-troopers turned into ruins; they remember his attacks on workers' homes and all the horrors committed by him and his like. When Farinacci threatens that means that the revolvers are cocked and the knives sharpened.

The champion of religion, as fascism falsely declared itself to be, revealed itself more and more as the rule of barbarism, slavery, murder and the ruthless persecution of all who thought differently. In view of the increasing anxiety of Italian Catholics, the Vatican could not remain neutral. From time to time the organ of the Vatican, the *Osservatore Romano*, called Farinacci and his organ to order. But the "flirtation" of Italian fascism with German fascism assumed increasingly the character of a regular "affair."

And when Mussolini one day had the "city of the Cross" decorated with swastikas in order to receive Hitler, the Vatican "went on strike." Its organ did not refer with so much as a syllable to Hitler's presence, and the Pope openly expressed his sorrow that Rome should be decorated with Hitler banners. The strained relations between the Vatican and fascism were obvious to everybody, and relations continued strained. In vain the Pope issued warnings on various



occasions against aggressive nationalism, which is "a thing peculiarly abhorrent"; he was preaching to deaf ears.

To the new racial "revelations" the Pope replied in an address on July 29, 1938, to the pupils of the *Propaganda Fide*:

"We do not desire any divisions within the great human family. . . . It is forgotten that humanity, the whole of humanity, is one single, great, universal, human race. Why should Italy imitate Germany?"

To Farinacci's attacks against Catholic Action the Pope replied (without mentioning Farinacci's name): "Whoever lays hands on Catholic Action lays hands on the Pope, and whoever lays hands on the Pope dies." And he quoted the well-known saying, "Who eats of the Pope, dies," adding: "This is a truth, and history proves the truth."

Mussolini, however, has no intention to alter the course he is following in the wake of Hitler. He declared boastfully to the inmates of a youth camp:

"You must understand clearly that also in the race question we march straight ahead. It was absurd to think that fascism imitated anybody."

The organ of the Vatican was the only Italian newspaper that did not publish Mussolini's declaration. The foreign press rightly drew attention to the fact that Mussolini had first used the expression "march straight ahead" during the war of plunder on Ethiopia.

Mussolini's underlings bring up even heavier guns. They declare to the clergy who are active on Italian soil—the Vatican, of course, is a "sovereign state"—and who refuse to adhere to the "principles" of race, that "justified reaction against them would not lead to any diplomatic note"—a threat of the well-known and well organized "spontaneous anger of the people," that bodes no good.

In view of this position, an inner

change is taking place among the masses of religious people, and even among the clergy, which though it must not be overestimated, gives ground for hoping that the uniting of the people against its fascist oppressors will now advance more rapidly than hitherto. For instance, the paper referred above, the *Regime Fascista*, reports that a priest Giuseppe Ancona from Balestrale near Palermo refused to say a free mass for a "volunteer" who had fallen in Spain (Fero was his name), giving as his reason:

"Fero's death is not an act for the cause of Italy, but an accident which might have happened to anyone in search of difficult adventures which he had chosen for himself."

That is only a single case, it is true, but it shows that the Catholics are *beginning to think*, that they are *beginning to examine* their relations to fascism.

And for Catholics in other countries the events in Italy are sufficient cause for reflection and for accepting the hand stretched out to them by the Communists for the common fight against the pestilence of fascism. The consolation that it is only German fascism that persecutes freedom of belief and that Italian fascism is something "better," has been proved false.

Birds of a feather flock together. Fascism, whether German or Italian, has only one aim: the suppression of the great mass of the people, the setting of the nations against one another, racial hatred, war-incendiarism, destruction of freedom. There is not a "good" fascism and an evil fascism—there cannot be any such difference. There is not any choice between the "good," "benevolent" Italian fascism and the bad, wicked German fascism. There is only *one* choice: *with the people* for freedom and peace, *or with* fascism against the people, against culture, against peace. There is only *one* choice: with the fascist monsters or with anti-fascist humanism. Whoever cares about the interests of humanity will not find the choice difficult.

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## Shall We Go Now, Or Shall We Wait?

WAR! shouts fascism. And this cry resounds everywhere; in politics and economics; it penetrates the press and literature, intensified through the talkies and amplifiers, it is forever preserved in the close atmosphere of fascism. When in this war-cry the word "Spain" was repeated again and again, the German people listened attentively. When the groaning of the German soldiers wounded in Spain resounded in the German harbor towns, many of the German people realized Hitler's insolent intervention in Spain. When the earth trembled under the boots of the German soldiers marching into Austria, it was realized in Germany that the neighboring country, Austria, has been attacked and forcibly chained to Germany. The impudent war propaganda and continuous provocation against Czechoslovakia are teaching the German people the seriousness of the situation, and making them conscious of the immediate danger of a new world war. This consciousness is hardened by the internal measures of the fascist government; the compulsory labor law; the construction of motor roads, barracks, airports and frontier fortifications; stricter military drill; parades and maneuvers; troop concentrations on the frontiers, etc. All these activities betoken war.

But the German people do not want war. The one-time war enthusiasm, artificially created by the fascist propaganda ministry, has turned into fear and aversion to war. Not only are the workers in town and country full of this dread of war, but the German army is also considerably affected. Again and again there are reports of German soldiers who went over to the republican army in Spain. Lately, especially since

May 21, the day on which the invasion of Czechoslovakia was planned, there have been increasing numbers of German soldiers crossing the frontier. The press writes of more than a hundred such incidents during recent weeks.

The *Prager Illustrierte Montag* published an appeal of the former editor of the *Voelksischer Beobachter*, Ernst Tapper, who has escaped from Germany. In this appeal Tapper speaks to the Sudeten Germans:

"Sudeten Germans! To you speaks a man who was body and soul a German soldier. To you speaks a man who was editor of the *Voelksischer Beobachter*. I believed for a long time that National Socialism would make the German people happy. But it made it terribly unhappy. I feel it my duty to tell you this and to warn you. Whole troops of soldiers are fleeing now from the German army. From a single company in Grafenwoerth nineteen men deserted. Do you realize what this means? Is that just badness and wickedness? No. It is a symptom of the sad conditions of our poor Germany."

Tapper reports nineteen deserters from a single company. Another deserter, Kueffen, who served in the 58th infantry regiment in Buekenburg, and was then transferred to Klagenfurt in order to train Austrian soldiers, reports the scandalous treatment of the German soldiers by fascist officers. He closes the report of his personal experience with the German army as follows:

"I hope you understand that I could not stand that any longer. But I am not an isolated case; others feel the same way. You should hear what they say in Klagenfurt. These people are desperate about the 'Anschluss.' They are



being deprived of their food, they have to leave their homes and find work in other towns, they have to work much harder for the same wages, which has also been happening in Germany for some time. . . . The Austrian soldiers, for whose training we had been sent to Klagenfurt, threaten not to stand Prussian drill any longer. I have heard that a specially brutal lieutenant of the 99th Mountain Brigade of Bavaria was thrown into a swamp."

In Oberhaid on the Bohemian-Upper-Austrian frontier there was a remarkable escape. A German soldier jumped on a train and tried to escape to Czechoslovakia. He had a hard fight with the German frontier guards before he succeeded in freeing himself and breaking the Czech cordon. The German soldier ran straight to the Czech police station, where he at once handed over his gun. He asked them not to extradite him to his Nazi tormentors, as he would then shoot himself on the spot. The reasons he gave for desertion were bad food and, for an Austrian, the unbearable conditions in the German army.

Near Dachau, fifteen deserters crossed the Czech frontier. Five of them said they were members of the special division No. 13 in Grafenwoerth (Bavaria) and that they had crossed the Czech frontier near Dachau in order to avoid being taken to Dachau or something worse for punishment.

Joseph W., a worker who deserted the 61st infantry regiment in Munich, reported the following activities in his division round about May 21:

"A certain restlessness was soon visible in all companies. One rumor followed another, until one day an instruction class was held on Germany and Czechoslovakia. Such instruction classes with subjects of a general nature are usually held on some special political event. . . . In the lecture about Czechoslovakia we were told that all the talk about war was nonsense. One should not spread so many rumors.

"Following this, conversation about Czechoslovakia was generally prohibited.

We thought: So it is serious after all. Soon after that the regiment was put on a war footing. . . . Leave was restricted. . . . From each company several soldiers were sent to the munition dump, where they had to get ready MG munitions. Gasmasks and artillery were prepared. . . . In the regiment the restlessness and fear of the impending war increased. Soldiers who knew each other well talked about how and when they could make a getaway. On the evening of May 22 the regiment received sudden orders. . . . The departure for the Munich-Laim station began at 8 o'clock. . . . We were told that the train would leave in an hour; then came the command: Stand at ease. On the platform the soldiers stood in groups and talked very uneasily. Nobody doubted now that things were serious, that there would be war, as each one had received 120 live cartridges. My companions and I stood in a group together. There was only one question in our minds: What shall we do, shall we go now, or shall we wait? . . . At last eleven men agreed to leave at once. Some stayed on; they wanted to desert later."

Near Warnsdorf in Northern Bohemia a German tank leader tried to reach the frontier. Shortly before he reached his destination the motor broke down. The tank leader walked the rest of the way and surrendered to the Czech frontier guard. He declared that he did not want to fight any longer in the Hitler army. Breakdowns of the motors of the German tanks are frequent.

A short while ago twelve German soldiers crossed the frontier near Bratislava (Czechoslovakia). Of the motorized divisions stationed in Munich fourteen soldiers crossed the frontier. During the troop concentrations on the Czech frontier about thirty German soldiers escaped from Neisse (Silesia). Near Znaim (Austro-Czechoslovakian frontier) five German soldiers crossed the borders. One hears, too, of escapes of German soldiers over the French and Dutch frontiers.

The accounts of the deserters make clear the state of the German army. Young recruits, called up for military service, thought that they would find here a true "folk-community." But in-

stead they found in most cases unbelievably brutal treatment by their superiors, who often tormented them in a disgusting way for their private amusement. The German army, always described to the youth as so fascinating, proves itself to be a rigid disciplinary institution. The slightest offense against the service regulations or against the officers is punished with arrest and corporal punishment. The food is bad and insufficient.

Also the longed-for comradeship is not what one expected. The contradictions which are to be found among the German people appear in the army. The uniform does not abolish the "Weltanschauung" (world outlook). There exist in the army the most varied political currents; even the officers do not form a uniform whole. These internal contradictions appear everywhere. They find at the moment their strongest expression in the dissatisfaction of many soldiers with the general conditions in the army, but also in the increasing fear and hatred of war. Many German sol-

diers, who surely would be ready to defend their country against foreign aggressors, are not willing to become victims of a fascist war of aggression. The fact that German fascism is the aggressor, the agitator for war, is no secret to the German army. In the army and especially in the divisions which are concentrated on the German frontiers, the lie of the "love for peace" of the German fascists reveals itself more and more.

It is the soldiers, who are dissatisfied with the conditions of the army, feeling the discipline as compulsion, finding themselves lied to and cheated, who are beginning to realize that they are not mobilized for the preservation of the German frontiers, but are being trained for the plans of conquest of German fascism, which is carrying the germ of decay in the army. But an army that even before the war carries the germ of decay is no reliable force. Founded on such a military force and on dissatisfied people, German fascism cannot expect to emerge victorious from a war it has itself prepared.

WHICH WAY FOR AMERICA—PROGRESS OR REACTION?

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## Far-Reaching Effects of the Ebro Offensive

THE offensive of the Spanish government which has halted Franco's drive to Valencia was not only an unpleasant surprise for the Spanish fascists. It is an equally unpleasant surprise for the Chamberlain government. For Chamberlain and his clique have staked their whole political existence on the success of the pact with Italy and the pact does not come into force until the Italians leave Spain. This pact was drawn up on the expectation of an early Italian victory. Of course, Chamberlain did not leave the date of this much-hoped-for Italian victory to fate and to Signor Mussolini. On the contrary, he proceeded to make his own peculiar contribution to that victory, by bringing pressure to bear on France to close the Spanish frontier, in order to stifle republican Spain.

When Franco at the end of July renewed his drive towards Valencia, the press which supports the line of Chamberlain plainly hoped for an immediate decisive Franco victory.

"Franco Battles Against Valencia's Defenses," "600 Guns and 500 Planes in Great Battle" were the headlines in the *Daily Telegraph* of July 25. "Last night," wrote this sheet, "the result of the great battle round Sagunto, which began on Saturday and may prove the decisive engagement of the Spanish war, was still in the balance."

The sudden counter-stroke on the Ebro took all these papers by surprise. The *Telegraph* was silent and so was the more openly pro-fascist *Observer*, which is always ready to whoop with joy if there is a small Franco success. The great victory on which the hopes of the reactionary wing of Conservatism were fixed has receded and perhaps disap-

peared. On the other hand, the Republican victory will strengthen the hands of those unions which want to take more vigorous action on behalf of the republic. For much more can be done. Since May of this year the Miners' Federation of Great Britain has collected more money than did the entire trade union movement between July, 1936, and May, 1938, and it may propose a Million Pound Fund at the Trade Union Congress.

The question of industrial action to force the British government to abandon the policy of non-intervention is also being discussed. The Right wing is trying to present this as a demand for an immediate general strike. This bluff will deceive no one. It is clear that there are various forms of industrial action between the complacent passivity of the General Council and a full-fledged general strike. It was perfectly possible last June, when Franco was bombing British ships, to have organized a trade union embargo on all goods bound for Franco Spain. It is perfectly possible for the Trade Union Congress to begin a propaganda which will prepare the mass of trade union members for effective action against the pro-fascist policy of non-intervention.

The Right wing of the Trade Union Congress pretends to regard this as a startling innovation. It is not. The British Trade Unions were the foundation of the Councils of Action, which threatened strike action if the government intervened to help Poland against Soviet Russia in 1920, and in the constitution of the Trade Union Congress under the heading "Duties of the General Council" (of the congress) there is the following paragraph:

"In order that the Trade Union movement may do everything in its power to prevent future wars, the General Council shall, in the event of there being a danger of an outbreak of war, call a special congress to decide on industrial action, such congress to be called if possible, *before war is declared.*"

The policy of using industrial action against the warmongers is the official policy of the congress and there is a growing opinion that it must be applied.

With the greatest self-sacrifice the Spanish people is admirably fulfilling its duty not only in relation to its own homeland and its own freedom, but also in relation to European democracy and world peace. Measured by the heroic and

successful struggle of the Spanish anti-fascists, the international working class has up till now only partially and insufficiently fulfilled its duty to the Spanish working class. In face of the successful offensive of the Spanish people, in face of the new efforts of German and Italian fascism to make good its defeat, and with the help of counter-revolutionary "non-intervention" to throttle the Spanish Republic, not only is action by the English trade unions necessary but also a greater measure of help from the whole international working class movement. After the advance of its army, the Spanish people expects an advance of international solidarity.

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## Unity—But Only With the Splitters

**T**HE Right-wing Labor leaders of Great Britain, who have always done everything in their power, both nationally and internationally, to oppose the united front and the People's Front are now extending the hand of friendship and reconciliation to the half-Trotskyite Independent Labor Party, a party that loves to talk of revolution and to shriek out "Left" phrases on every possible occasion. Why this fraternization—which to the superficial observer appears so inexplicable?

The Independent Labor Party, a body which at the most has 2,000 members, whose numbers and influence are steadily on the decline, asked the Labor Party Executive to discuss common action, particularly on electoral questions.

The Labor Party Executive not only agreed to do so, but when the meeting took place actually invited the Independent Labor Party to reaffiliate to the Labor Party.

Yet on the surface the differences of opinion between the Independent Labor Party and the Labor Party are very great indeed. The Labor Party is pledged to support collective security against the fascist aggressor. The Independent Labor Party declares that to support collective security is to lead the Labor movement to support imperialist war. The Labor Party supports the Spanish government (alas, more with words than with deeds). The Independent Labor Party is one of the bitterest and most unscrupulous critics of the Spanish government. Its leading member, Brockway, has declared that the victory of the Negrin government would be little better than the victory of fascism. The Labor Party declares that it is for the unity of the working class, with the exception of the Communists. The Independent Labor

Party approves the tactics of the Pivert faction, which is responsible for the split in the French Socialist Party.

Why then is there a desire on the part of the Right-wing Laborites to embrace the Independent Labor Party? Mainly, I think, because that party is against the People's Front, against Communism and against the Soviet Union.

What has happened to all those arguments that the Right-wing Laborites were wont to employ against the Communists? The arguments that association with a Left party would mean a loss of votes; that in any case the Communist Party was only a small party and would bring no new strength to the Labor Party. All these arguments disappear when it is necessary to win a new ally for the struggle against the unity of the working class.

But let the Labor Party beware. The new ally will not only struggle against unity with the Communists and unity in the People's Front. It will struggle against the unity of the existing Labor Party. Not many months ago the American Socialist Party opened its ranks to such Trotskyite and half-Trotskyite elements. Today that party is split into a dozen fragments.

The French Socialist Party opened its arms to the Trotskyites, at the same time making sneering remarks about the intolerant attitude of the Communist Party of France. The Trotskyites repaid this confidence by combining with the Independent Labor Party's special friends, the Pivertists, to engage in actions which have resulted in a split in the party.

The workers in the Labor Party will be wise not to regard this proposal as one which is made in the interests of unity but as one which can only facilitate disruption.

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## Doriot Is Hitler's Lackey

**D**ORIOT has landed up with Franco. He was welcomed by the lackeys of Hitler and Mussolini. Queipo de Llano embraced him; a brilliant crowd of generals and colonels accompanied him; civil governors and fascist military officials displayed effusive politeness. After presentation of orders and gifts, after hearty toasts and high-sounding speeches (to say nothing of the eloquent silences), the curtain fell on this luxurious revue. And then the obsequious porter of fascism took his dirty smuggled goods into France with an easy mind.

In the middle of Paris he unfurled the dishonored banner of fascism and war. At a meeting this traitor cynically cried: "For the first time the fame and glory of the Spanish Nationalists are proclaimed in Paris!" Then he demanded the unity of all the forces of reaction. Now it is at least clear: Doriot has put on the blood-stained livery of a flunkey of Franco, of an under-flunkey of Hitler and Mussolini.

A war of intervention is devastating Spain. German and Italian troops and war materials are bringing death to masses of the Spanish people and destroying the culture of centuries. And at the very moment when General Reichenau is declaring that the war in Spain is "a training school in perfection" for the German army, at the very moment when the Italian press is cynically publishing its casualty lists of soldiers, officers and fliers, the numbers of thousands of tons of bombs dropped and rounds of machine guns fired on the population of Republican Spain—at that very moment Doriot declares in a loud voice in Paris that

Italian assistance for Franco is primarily "diplomatic."

Presumably the defeats of Guadalajara and on the Ebro were also "diplomatic"?

And what has Doriot to say about the systematic destruction of the most beautiful towns of Spain by the Italian and German airplanes and artillery, about the appalling mass-murder of Spanish women and children? Fawning and crawling, he delivers Franco's declaration: "We cannot wage a totalitarian war on Spain. . . . Only harbors and military objectives are bombed." And he himself surpasses even this shameless lie: "Is it not necessary to protect the towns and the harvest, to limit the destruction to the utmost possible extent?"

No war on the Spaniards, bombing only of harbors and military objectives? Utmost possible limitation of the destruction? What is the reply of the injured in that hospital in Barcelona, in which *all* the inmates under treatment are women, children and old people? What is the reply of the mother that lies there with a baby whose arm had to be amputated? What is the reply of the citizens of Madrid, or of the survivors of the fishing village of Nules, which the fascist fliers leveled to the ground?

It is a known fact that wherever Franco's bandits penetrated, they carried out mass slaughter, in order to exterminate whole families, not only of Communists, but also of members of trade unions and adherents of the People's Front.

They were all mown down: wives, children, grandchildren, distant relatives, even babies at the breast—none



were spared. It is a known fact that two million Spaniards fled from the fascist hordes, leaving behind their homes and all their belongings, in order to find refuge in the territory of Republican Spain. And all the world has read that communique of the rebel army, in which Franco bitterly complains that "the civilian population were accomplices" which secured the success of the Republican offensive. Nevertheless, Doriot arrives at the conclusion that it is better to be with Franco than in the France of the People's Front.

It is clear: Doriot has promised Franco to bring about in France what Franco brought about in Spain—civil war. Like Franco, Doriot can count on the help of Hitler and Mussolini. At a meeting in Bilbao he threw aside all reserve and cried:

"The French government is the same sort as that against which you rose with your arms in your hands. You have shown us the way; we will follow you."

Is not that positive incitement to armed civil war against the legal government of France? Incitement to imitate the rising of the insurgents of two years ago? And is it possible to doubt that Doriot, like Franco, has received his directions, as well as the financial and *material* means, for organizing this rising? Is it not perfectly clear that Doriot has been given the task of organizing a "Fifth Column," a regular bloc of all the enemies of the People's Front?

In order to organize his dirty work better, Doriot has assumed the mask of "nationalism." But his "nationalism" is just as shabby as Franco's, who sold his country to fascism, just as Doriot is ready to sell France. If anyone should still have any doubts, it will be enough to refer him to the statements made by Franco's general Kindelan, who calls himself Chief of Franco's Air Force (Franco's Air Force!):

"In the first week of a war with France we could lay Bordeaux, Toulouse,

Marseilles, Biarritz, Bayonne in ashes and paralyze the French railways. . . . A war with France would develop our warlike spirit and gain for us the support of the ancient enemies of France, who remember their old hate of former days. A world war would without a doubt result in France becoming a power of the third or fourth rank."

This was written eight days before Doriot's arrival in Spain. A week later Doriot was received by Kindelan.

The whole pack of more or less open fascists and of the friends of Hitler and Mussolini in France, and all their gang of criminals and the hangers-on of crime, will answer to the call of the "nationalist" Doriot. They will gather round him, like jackals drawn by the smell of carrion.

In short, we are faced with a conspiracy against which the united forces of the French people must be brought into action in order to prevent a war of invasion which would be a hundred times more bitter and murderous than that which has been inflicted for two years on the heroic people of Spain by the hangmen of Burgos, Berlin and Rome.

It was the People's Front which has broken Doriot's ribs, has smashed the renegade who for years has not succeeded in splitting the forces of the working class, who is today trying to unite the forces of reaction. After he had lost ground with the proletariat, after he was turned out of the position of Mayor of St. Denis and was beaten as deputy for the Chamber, he was nothing more than an upstart who had collapsed.

Hitler picked him up. A few million francs, the newspaper of a disloyal solicitor, offices, and more or less admitted protection could not put him on his feet again politically. Now Franco has tried to come to his assistance. Two measures of the French government also helped him; the closing of the Spanish frontier and the seizure of the gold which belongs to republican Spain. These are what Doriot boasts of, these are the two trumps which he plays.

Doriot has fallen low, though from no great height. If his treachery is today so clear, for that we have to thank the activity of the masses and the unity of the people in the People's Front, which has unmasked the traitor, first as traitor to the Communist Party, then as traitor to the whole working class movement, and finally as traitor to France herself.

For the interests of the whole people are today so closely bound up with the interests of the working class that every act of treachery to the working class leads logically and inevitably to treachery to the nation.

The unity of the people will make short work of Hitler's agent.

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BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, U.S.A.—

## **The People's Front**

BY EARL BROWDER

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## The New Brother of the P.O.U.M.

A NEW bastard has been begotten of the lecherous alliance between fascism and Trotskyism: the party of the "Left" Socialist Pivert.

Were it possible to characterize as a discussion the exchange of confused and contradictory balderdash which took place at the conference called to found this party, one would have to say that this "discussion" gave rise to the following basic principle—"We must throw bal-last overboard in order to save our lives."

The first "act" of this conference consisted in the acceptance of a resolution in favor of the members of the P.O.U.M., Franco's spies. On this question, it would appear, there was complete unanimity. The delegates were also in agreement on the fact that they were "cut off from the masses." But considerable differences of opinion arose when the conference proceeded to discuss questions, so to speak, "of principle."

The majority of the former adherents of the "revolutionary Left" has not followed these disruptors. This fragmentary sect, therefore, which turned up in full strength, was faced with the disturbing question as to whether it should preserve unchanged its pseudo-revolutionary phraseology, or whether the wine should be watered down. One was thus presented with the grotesque spectacle of these masters of extremist phrases, who had hitherto accused their own kith and kin of being cowards and traitors, beginning to shrink from their own definitions.

"Socialization of the means of exchange?" Impossible, that would alienate too many people. "Socialization of the means of distribution?" That is less

dreadful. In the end the conference decided in favor of the "socialization of the means of exchange with a view to the establishment of a regime of distribution."

That can harm no one, least of all the capitalist regime, and preserves at any rate a certain "theoretical" veneer, does it not?

But differences of opinion became really serious when the question of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" came under discussion. These people, who had always posed as the standard-bearers of the dictatorship of the proletariat, who had had the impudence to accuse the Communists of casting aside that principle, were suddenly abashed at their own former hardihood. Some of the delegates declared that if the new party were to accept the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat, people might discern a similarity between the aims of the Pivertists and those of the Soviet Union, and that would be altogether too much for the new brother of the P.O.U.M. Other delegates retorted that the dictatorship of the proletariat had always been the *pièce de resistance* of the Pivertists. In the end the conference renounced the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat and agreed upon the "dictatorship of the toiling classes." The so-called "inviolable principle" of exclusive concentration on the working class was thrown overboard when the sect suddenly found itself outside the workers' movement.

But our disruptors were by no means at the end of their sufferings. What attitude were they to adopt on the question of unity? "We must make offers to the Communist Party and the Socialist



Party," declared those who had hitherto come forward as the most embittered enemies of the united front. "On no account must we do that," retorted the protagonists of "inviolable principles."

But the climax came with the intervention of Pivert in favor of the People's Front. He probably had in one of his pockets a draft speech in which as usual he characterized the People's Front as "a wretched dung heap" which "must be swept away," and in the other pocket a second dealing with the necessity for participation in the People's Front, with the sole object, of course, of disintegrating it from within. But his sacrifice of the old "principle" was made in vain, for his adherents rejected participation in the People's Front by 100 votes to 83. It is a difficult business to carry out disrupting tactics when the masses desire unity.

But for this very reason we must expect desperate attempts and criminal maneuvers on the part of Pivert and Company to weaken the struggle of the working people. Pivert was well aware why he suddenly, to the astonishment of his adherents, demanded participation in the People's Front. Doriot's attempt to weaken the workers' movement, and the People's Front from *without*, has failed miserably; the enemies of the workers' movement and the People's Front, therefore, attach the greatest importance to disrupting the unity of the people through their agents from *within*. The Pivertists provoke disturbances at workers' meetings just as they have already done in the case of Paul Faure and Dormoy.

Only recently they created a disturbance at the Teachers' Congress and hissed a protagonist of trade union unity and the People's Front in the person of Jouhaux. But the method of provoking brawls and clashes can achieve no great effect. The provocateurs will only become a really serious danger when they succeed in insinuating themselves into the organizations of the workers and the People's Front, so as to smuggle in

fascist-Trotskyite poison and to disorganize their ranks. Hence the greatest vigilance is necessary. We must learn to detect pro-fascist propaganda behind demagogic-revolutionary phrases. For example, the Teachers Congress in Nantes adopted a resolution with regard to "orientation in respect to the trade unions" which indubitably represents an advance on former resolutions. Nevertheless, it is possible to discover all kinds of Trotskyite contraband in this resolution.

This resolution, which has not a word to say with regard to Spain, contains one paragraph in which it is stated that international solidarity is "bound up with the universal extension of conflicts." That is a sentence that Chamberlain would cheerfully endorse. It is a justification of the policy of "non-intervention" (which, moreover, is nowhere condemned in the resolution). Similarly one searches in vain in this resolution for a differentiation between the democratic and the fascist countries; on the contrary, one finds reactionary phrases with regard to "ideological blocs." The defensive struggle of the democratic countries against the fascist aggressors appears in the resolution as "conflicts in which groups of states confront one another." Furthermore, this resolution places the struggle against the Treaty of Versailles in the foreground, a thing which, in view of the war-like demands of fascism for a redistribution of territories, means nothing less than support for the fascist aggressors. When the resolution refers to "unhesitating opposition to war," the feelings of the masses are really being expressed. But the concrete proposals contained in the resolution are the exact contrary, for how is it possible simultaneously to defend peace and to support the fascists?

The resolution also takes up an ambiguous attitude on the question of the Popular Front. After declaring that it "loyally" recognizes the results achieved by the working class thanks to the Popular Front (the authors of the reso-

lution reveal by the colorless and insipid word "loyally" how far from friendly is their attitude to the Popular Front), the resolution stigmatizes the program of the People's Front as "inadequate"—and that at a moment when the most urgent task consists in struggling for the *fulfilment* of this program, inadequate though it may be.

An important fact in connection with this Congress is that, despite the machinations and provocative behavior of certain Trotskyites the voice of peace was able to make itself heard. The teachers' unions throughout the country had instructed their delegates to champion a firm and logical peace policy and to take up a firm stand against the pro-Hitler Trotskyite crew. The delegates fulfilled their mission. This is shown very clearly by the fact that many of the delegates did not agree with the contents of the resolution. The Trotskyite elements, nevertheless, succeeded in taking the delegates by surprise and forcing on them this resolution, which by no means expresses the feelings of the whole body of teachers.

This provides fresh evidence of how the enemies of the People's Front are endeavoring to disintegrate from within the organizations attached to it, to sabotage the People's Front, and how necessary it is to display more than ordinary vigilance. It is, above all, particularly important to defend from provocation the C.G.T. which, with its five million mem-

bers, is the pride of the French proletariat and enjoys the admiration of the working people throughout the world and which represents one of the most powerful guarantees of the achievements of the working people of France. The only means of warding off, once and for all, disrupting agents of the stamp of Pivert is to increase, to consolidate and to extend unity. It was no other than Pasionaria who addressed this urgent warning to the French people when she called upon the workers to struggle against those "lepers among the people," the Piverts and the Doriot, who, under various masks, the mask of "revolution," of "nationalism," are traitors to the revolution and to the nation.

When, four years ago, the various Trotskyite groups, which had long since insinuated themselves like a wedge between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, realized that they would be crushed by the united front of both parties, they joined the Socialist Party and endeavored to split it. They have now carried through the split, at an important moment of the struggle against the allied forces of reaction, in the hope of creating fresh disagreements between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. The strengthening of unity of action, the united front, the political unity of the proletariat, the strengthening of the People's Front will put a spoke in the wheel of these enemies of the working class.

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# The Victory of Leipzig

THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REICHSTAG FIRE TRIAL

BY ERNST FISCHER

**T**HERE are moments in history which continue to shed an enduring light; moments in which a single individual incarnates the spirit and dignity of mankind.

Let us remember such moments. The great Greek sage Socrates, condemned by the obscurantists to die, emptied the cup of hemlock with a smile after profound and joyous conversations. The Swiss peasant Winkelried threw himself on the armored knights of the Hapsburgs and crying, "A passage for freedom" gathered a sheaf of their spears in his own body and falling, dragged the wielders of the spears to earth with him, thus opening a gap in their ranks. The scientist Galileo, who maintained that the earth moved round the sun, was compelled by the tortures of the Inquisition to retract but yet threw in the teeth of his judges the cry: "And yet it moves."

Mankind remembers these historic moments with gratitude for they express in clear and concise form the victory of the higher spirit and the higher morale over brute force and the obscurantism which relies on armaments and the machinery of the state.

Such a historic moment was the moment five years ago when Georgi Dimitroff faced the butchers of the German people in the courtroom of the Leipzig tribunal. Dimitroff, the Communist fighter for liberty, kept in chains for five months in a narrow cell, and the chosen victims of the fascist rulers of Germany, won a *historic victory* in Leipzig. As the working class in its struggle for freedom,

peace and socialism incarnates the proudest hopes and the noblest aspirations of all progressive mankind, so did Dimitroff, facing the Reich tribunal in Leipzig, incarnate the spirit and the dignity of all progressive mankind opposing the bestiality of fascism. His example inspired millions of men and women, shaken, discouraged or misled by the sudden rise of barbarism in Germany with the strength to resist fascism and not lose sight of the high aims of human evolution. The attitude of Dimitroff in court, the impotent outbursts of Goering against the proud and courageous prisoner who had very soon assumed the role of prosecutor, caused millions of men and women to understand instinctively what Dimitroff a year later, at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, summed up in the words: "*Fascism is a ferocious power but an unstable one.*"

Crowding out of filthy sewers like a pack of loathsome rats, breaking into politics out of the underworld, in their pockets the money thrown to them by big business and in their hands the knife of the professional killer—thus did fascism come to power in Germany. Frightened by the extent of the economic crisis, by the profound indignation of the popular masses, by the impending social earthquake which would inevitably shake the edifice of their rule to its foundations, the lords of coal and iron, the commanding officers of German capitalism took into their service unscrupulous gang leaders and daredevil adventurers and opened a way for them to the Reich chancellery.



The Junkers of Eastern Prussia, their traditional power jeopardized by the muddy flood of the "Osthilfe" subsidy scandal, looked round for help and they too left the road open to Hitler and Goering. The clan of old man Hindenburg—who only a short while ago had pledged his word of honor that he would never appoint Herr Hitler to cabinet rank—saw their ill-gotten gains endangered by the incipient revelations concerning the "Osthilfe" subsidies scandal and wanted at all cost to prevent anything more from becoming known about this unprecedented theft of the taxpayers' money, about the waste and dissipation of billions which were wangled into the pockets of the insatiable Junkers instead of being given to the poverty-stricken peasants.

In order to shield the corruption of his own Junker clan, Hindenburg appointed Herr Hitler to be Reich Chancellor of Germany; the breaking of a word of honor, the covering up of the Junker dirt and the protection of putrescent capitalism from the anger of the popular masses were described, with bloody irony, as the "rejuvenation of Germany." The most reactionary section of the ruling classes, the Thyssens and Kirdorfs, the Flicks and Voegelers gave the fascist gangsters, paid and pampered by them, control of the state machine; but another section of the master class, the conservative German nationalists were not prepared to give way to the fascist gangsters without a struggle. The fascist gang leaders were not yet sitting foursquare in the saddle. They feared a counter-stroke of the conservative German nationalists. They were afraid that broad popular masses might unite for anti-fascist action.

In order to forestall such possibilities, the fascist gang leaders prepared a monstrous provocation: the *burning of the Reichstag*. Through an underground passage connecting the palace of the Reichstag President (then residence of Goering) with the Reichstag building, the torchbearers of the counter-revolution entered the assembly hall of the

Reichstag and set fire to it. "By accident" none of the fascist gang leaders spoke at any election meeting that evening; "by accident" they were all in Berlin that night; "by accident" Hitler, Goebbels and Goering met on the scene of the fire immediately after the flames broke through and cried with the divinatory power of a Hanussen: "This is the beacon flare of Communism!"

In actual fact the Reichstag fire was the "beacon flare" for a campaign of frightful terrorism against the anti-fascists. All the officers of the Communist Party on whom the Nazis could lay their hands were arrested. The Socialist and democratic opposition was suppressed by emergency decrees and terrorist measures. The German nationalist opposition was intimidated. By paralyzing anti-fascist propaganda and giving unlimited scope to fascist propaganda Hitler won new votes among the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie.

In the dark surge of the smoke clouds overcasting the German sky the fascists destroyed the organizations of the working class, the democratic constitution, all the bulwarks of freedom and human dignity. In their election meetings they announced that they would "wade in blood up to the ankles" and predicted incessantly a "night of the long knives." This election pledge they have redeemed in a frightful way. The "long knives" of the fascist dictatorship have mutilated the German people, slashed German culture to rags and cut into the flesh of Germany the law of the jungle, servitude and misery. The German people stared paralyzed with horror at the lightning invasion of barbarism. The German people had suffered much even before the advent of fascism, but this collapse of all human values, this unbridled reign of beastliness it had not thought possible. "Their bark is worse than their bite," said hundreds of thousand of people when the fascists yelled their threats against them. The bite was much worse than even the mildest imagination could invent. That the obscene anti-Semitism of morbidly perverted

swine would one day be elevated to be the law of the land; that the violent hatred in which a degenerate wastrel holds the class-conscious working class, the democratic ideal of liberty and everything straightforward, manly and decent would one day swing the lash over the German people; that the rotten cynicism of a morally corrupt literary charlatan would one day prescribe to the German people what it was to consider German, right and proper—this was something Germany had not foreseen even in her most fearful nightmares.

This unprecedented moral and political collapse plunged masses of the German people into an abyss of dull despair. While tens of thousands of revolutionary workers clenched their teeth and prepared firmly to take up the underground struggle against the fascist dictatorship; while the anonymous and magnificent heroism of the underground fighters and of the tormented anti-fascists in the concentration camps incarnated the honor and dignity of the German people, millions yet stood irresolute and impotent before the horrors of the new reality. Their faith in the future, in the evolution of mankind was endangered; not only had their parties, their trades unions, their democratic rights collapsed overnight but the very moral foundations of all human community seemed to have toppled down. This was not only the reactionary class enemy who set up his rule over the people, this was the rule of everything mankind had driven back step by step in thousands of years of effort; the rule of every kind of baseness and infamy, the rule of murder, untruth, treachery, deceit, of abysmal iniquity. As out of a stinking piece of carrion the unbridled dictatorship of putrescent capitalism oozed out and overflowed all Germany—no wonder that millions began to lose their faith in humanity.

Such was the condition of the German people when the fascists staged the great trial in Leipzig. They needed this trial in order to commend themselves to the world as its "savior from Bolshevism."

Though the Reichstag fire had made possible the establishment of their dictatorship in Germany, it had not convinced the democratic nations of the "guilt" of the Communists and the need for the fascist rule of violence. On the contrary, all well-informed and thoughtful people soon knew that the incendiaries were not in prison but in the government and that the fire had been laid by those who profited by it. The democratic world pointed its finger at the incendiaries and therefore the German fascists considered it necessary to cleanse themselves of the accusation of this crime by a public trial.

The trial was well prepared. The accused had been carefully selected. The miserable Van der Lubbe, a derelict of capitalist society, procured by the clairvoyant Hanussen for the Nazis, and frightfully abused; the weakling Torgler, a Communist M.P., who knew his way about well enough in the machinery of parliament but not in the hurricane of the revolutionary class struggle; and finally three Bulgarian Communists, two of whom knew no German at all and one, Georgi Dimitroff, only little. With these prisoners the Minister of Propaganda hoped to get through the trial with success and make the flesh of the philistines creep. A mentally defective lumpen proletarian, a colorless party official and three "men of the Balkans"—could an "international conspiracy" be staged more effectively?

The stage management was completed by a "march-past" of fascist "jurisdiction." The trial began on September 21. On September 29 a "congress of German jurists" was opened in Leipzig with the participation of 15,000 jurists, judges, barristers, solicitors, clerks of courts, etc. "In order to come closer to the people," as the German newspapers put it, these hopeful jurists had to march past the Reich tribunal in uniform, one-two, one-two, right-left, jurisdiction marching with the Prussian goose-step. The Reich commissar for justice, Reich Minister Dr. Frank, made a few speeches and shouted at the German guardians of the law:

"Democracy is identical with extensive injustice and immorality!" Equipped with this program, Hitler justice could set to work.

But this work led to results very different from those expected by the Minister for Propaganda. Everything had been so well prepared and so well thought out—and then a man stood up, smashed the cunning stage-management and raised the truth to such a height in his strong hands that all could see it. *In the person of the Bulgarian fighter for liberty, of the revolutionary fighter Georgi Dimitroff it was the working class, it was Communism with all its intellectual and moral superiority which faced the fascist tribunal.*

It was clear from the very start that *two worlds* were standing face to face, and that a great, a historic issue was to be decided there. It is always a moving spectacle to see an innocent man fighting for his life and his honor in court, but what happened in that court was far more than this. There an innocent prisoner fought not only for his own life and honor but for the rights and the truth of his class, for the purity and greatness of his cause, for the glory and the victory of his convictions. From the first one could feel what he summed up in these powerful terms in his closing speech:

"I admit that the language I speak is hard and severe, but my struggle and my life have been hard and severe, too. Nevertheless, my language is an open and sincere language. I am accustomed to call things by their proper names. I am not a lawyer defending his client here because he is obliged to.

"I am defending myself as an accused Communist.

"I am defending my own Communist revolutionary honor.

"I am defending my ideas, my Communist convictions.

"I am defending the meaning and content of my life.

"Therefore, every word pronounced by me before the court is, so to speak, *flesh of my flesh, and blood of my blood*. Every word is an expression of my most profound indignation against an unfair

charge, against the fact that this anti-Communist crime is ascribed to Communists."\*

The first short cross-examination of Dimitroff already caused the world to prick up its ears. For the man who spoke here was a man every thread of whose life was filled with his revolutionary task, a man whose strong and passionate personality was only the perfect incarnation of a fighting morale and an ideal of humanity transcending everything personal.

*The Judge:* You have had previous convictions in Bulgaria. Will you tell us about them?

*Dimitroff:* I have heard that I have been sentenced to death in Bulgaria. I have made no further inquiries on the subject because I am not interested.

*The Judge:* According to information received from the Bulgarian Legation you were sentenced to penal servitude for life in January, 1924, for having instigated the September rising in Bulgaria. Have you made inquiries concerning these convictions, perhaps in a roundabout manner?

*Dimitroff:* The conviction is of no significance and no interest to me.

For this prisoner only those facts are of significance and of interest which are immediately connected with the monstrous accusations made against the Communists, the facts which point the way to the true incendiaries, the fascist stage-managers of the trial. With the greatest skill and persistence Dimitroff frustrated the intentions of the court, attempted to elicit a spark of truth from the impassive Van der Lubbe and by his lightning-swift and surprising questions shed the first light on the dark secrets of the Reichstag fire. Again and again he turns to Van der Lubbe in order to enliven and to shake him, to awaken lost memories in him and with unerring assurance he takes up the clue, from the very moment it was mentioned, that Van der Lubbe had spent the night before the

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\* Stella D. Blagoyeva, *Dimitroff*, p. 98, International Publishers, New York.



fire in Hennigsdorf. His surmise that the bridge between Van der Lubbe and the hall of the Reichstag was built in Hennigsdorf is suddenly confirmed when from the dormant memory of the Dutchman the admission emerges that he was with the Nazis in Hennigsdorf.

Relentlessly Dimitroff stresses the statements of the experts to the effect that the fire was laid in expert fashion and by several persons; he is concerned not with proving that he himself had nothing to do with the fire, but with demonstrating to the world that it was the fascists themselves who were the incendiaries. "That's what I always said!" he calls out to the experts when they said that Van der Lubbe alone would have been unable to set fire to the assembly hall in so expert a manner. "*We know only the miserable Faust of this act of arson but where is the Mephistopheles?*"

The lame minister for propaganda, nicknamed "Mephistopheles" by his friends and his enemies alike, was in no doubt about the meaning of this question. Actually it is not the President of the Court, it is Dimitroff who directs the proceedings, although he is often deprived of the right to speak, although he is repeatedly removed from court, although all his questions are refused an answer. Yet he directs the proceedings and reveals the truth until the guilty ones can no longer conceal themselves and the stage-managers of the trial are forced out in front of the footlights of publicity.

Goering is examined as a witness—and bursts like a pricked bladder. This hectoring, bloated power of fascism is turned into a bawling, screaming, despicable bundle of nerves by the intellectual and moral superiority of the prisoner incarnating Communism. A ferocious but unstable power . . . this is what Dimitroff inscribed on his memory. The clash between the hero and the executioner, between the representative of Communism and the representative of fascism becomes an immortal historic scene.

With mouthy complacency Goering

tells the court how he trained the Prussian police to murder the "Reds."

"I had to hammer into the heads of my men again that responsibility was mine alone. If you shoot, it is I who shoots. I had to explain to them: 'If there is a dead man lying there, it is I who shot him. . . .' Only after this could I use them at all in order to proceed against the Left."

The Reichstag fire "had taken him completely by surprise" but then he had an inspiration. "That instant I knew: the Communist Party is guilty of the Reichstag fire. I wish the rest of the world had seen this as clearly as I. . . I know, with an absolute clairvoyant certainty that the Communists laid this fire. . . ."

With calm superiority Dimitroff asks the fleshy clairvoyant:

"After you as Prime Minister and Home Secretary had declared that the Communists were the incendiaries and that it was the Communist Party who had committed this crime with the assistance of Van der Lubbe and some foreign Communists, did not this of necessity direct the police investigation and later the judiciary investigation into a predetermined channel and exclude the possibility of seeking other ways and finding the true incendiaries of the Reichstag?"

*Goering*: I am not a crime investigator but a responsible minister of state and therefore it was not so important for me to find the individual little scoundrel but to nail down the Party, the trend of opinion which was responsible for the crime. For me this was a political crime and it was also my opinion that the criminals were to be found in your Party.

*Dimitroff*: Is the Prime Minister aware that this "criminal trend of opinion," this Party rules a sixth part of the globe, i.e., the Soviet Union?

*Goering*: I don't care what happens in Russia. I am concerned only with the Communist Party of Germany and with the foreign rascals who have come here to set fire to the Reichstag.

*Dimitroff*: This Bolshevik trend of opinion rules the Soviet Union, the greatest and the best country in the world. Is that known?

*Goering: (snorting with rage)* I will tell you what is known to the German people. It is known to the German people that you are behaving insolently here and that you have rushed here to set fire to the Reichstag. In my eyes you are a scoundrel who should go straight to the gallows.

*President Bünger (anxiously):* Dimitroff, I have already told you that you must not carry on Communist propaganda here. You must not be surprised if the witness loses his temper like this. I forbid you to carry on such propaganda. You must ask only relevant questions.

*Dimitroff:* I am very satisfied with the reply of the Prime Minister.

*President Bünger:* Whether you are satisfied or not is a matter of indifference to me. I now deprive you of the right to speak.

*Dimitroff:* I have one more relevant question to ask.

*President Bünger:* I now deprive you of the right to speak.

*Dimitroff:* Perhaps you are afraid of my questions, Mr. Prime Minister?

The president of the tribunal jumps up and orders Dimitroff to be dragged from the hall. Goering is shaking all over with rage, loses the last remnant of his temper, clenches his fists and roars like a wild beast: "It is you who will be afraid that I might get hold of you when you are out of prison!"

The thin layer of "impartial justice" crumbles away leaving naked terrorism bared to the eyes of the world. All eyes are turned with profound contempt towards the Prussian Prime Minister who is unable to conceal even ever so scantily the cowardly brutality of fascism. At this moment all present feel that the representative of Communism has won, that the raving hysteria of the fascist gang leaders cannot cope with their great historic opponent. Dimitroff facing the Reich tribunal becomes the indelible image of the proletarian struggle for freedom against a disintegrating world.

Fascism was incarnated in that hall by a raving gangster boss who styles himself "Prime Minister," by a gang of cold-blooded incendiaries, venal rene-

gades, thieves, vagabonds, professional criminals and police spies called by the prosecution to bolster up their case. Above this scum of the human race towers the gigantic figure of the revolutionary fighter for liberty and the popular tribune, Dimitroff. With his foot he crushes the lie, shows his brothers the road to the struggle and to victory and in his final speech he drums into the ears of the working class and of the popular masses:

"... The suppression of the Party, the breaking up of the mass organizations, the loss of legality—all these things of course were severe blows to the revolutionary movement. *But this does not by any means signify that all is lost.*

"In February, 1933, the Communist Party was threatened with suppression. The Communist press was prohibited, the suppression of the Communist Party was expected. The German Communist Party was expecting this. This matter was spoken of in leaflets, in the newspapers. The German Communist Party knew very well that in many countries the Communist Parties are prohibited, but that notwithstanding they continue their work and struggle. . . .

"*Even though it be illegal the German Communist Party, given the right situation, can effect a revolution.* This is shown by the experience of the *Russian Communist Party*. The Russian Communist Party was illegal, it was subjected to bloody persecution, but afterwards the working class, with the Communist Party at its head, came to power. The leading minds of the German Communist Party could not reason thus—that now everything is lost, that it is either one way or other, either an uprising or ruin. Such foolish thoughts could not be entertained by the leaders of the Communist Party. The German Communist Party was perfectly well aware that illegal work would cost numerous victims and demand self-sacrifice and daring, but it knew also that its revolutionary forces would strengthen and that it would prove able to carry out the tasks confronting it. It is therefore altogether out of the question that the German Communist Party at that time should have wanted to stake all on one card. *The Commu-*

nists are fortunately not so short-sighted as their opponents, and they do not lose their heads even in the most difficult situations.

" . . . One question has not been cleared up either by the prosecution or by the counsel for defense. I am not surprised that they think this unnecessary. They are very much afraid of this question. This is the question as to what was the political situation in Germany in February, 1933. I must dwell upon this question here. At the end of February the political situation was such that a struggle was going on within the camp of the National Front. . . .

"The internal struggle in the national camp was going on in connection with the struggle behind the scenes in the economic circles of Germany. A struggle was going on between the circle of Thyssen and Krupp (the war industry), who for many years on end had financed the National-Socialist movement, and their competitors who were to be pushed into the background.

"Thyssen and Krupp wanted to establish in the country the principle of autocratic rule and absolute domination under their virtual leadership, coupled with a considerable cutting down of the living standards of the working class, and for this purpose it was necessary to crush the revolutionary proletariat. The Communist Party in this period was striving to form the united front in order to unite the forces for defense against the attempts made by the National-Socialists to destroy the labor movement. Part of the Social-Democratic workers felt the necessity of the united front of the working class. They understood this. Many thousands of Social-Democratic workers came over to the ranks of the Communist Party of Germany. But in February and March the task of establishing the united front did not by any means signify an uprising or preparations for it; it signified only the mobilization of the working class against the predatory campaign of the capitalists and against the violence of the National-Socialists. . . .

"The unknown provocateur took care of all the preparations for the fire. This Mephistopheles has contrived to vanish without leaving a trace. This stupid tool, this miserable Faust is here, but Mephistopheles has vanished. It was most

probably in Hennigsdorf that connections were established between Van der Lubbe and the representatives of political provocation, the agents of the enemies of the working class. . . .

"What is Van der Lubbe? A Communist? Not at all. An Anarchist? No. He is a declassed worker, he is a rebellious *Lumpenproletarian*—a creature who has been misused, who has been made use of against the working class. But he is not a Communist. He is not an Anarchist. Not one Communist in the world, nor an Anarchist either would conduct himself in court as Van der Lubbe is doing. Real Anarchists commit senseless acts, but in court they answer for them and explain their aims. If any Communist did anything similar, he would not keep silence in court when innocent persons are sitting in the dock. No, Van der Lubbe is not a Communist and not an Anarchist; he is a tool who has been misused by fascism.

"I propose that the following decision be adopted:

"1. That the supreme court acknowledge our innocence in this matter and recognize the charge as incorrect; this applies to us—to me, Torgler, Popov and Tanev.

"2. That Van der Lubbe be regarded as a tool made use of to harm the working class.

"3. That those guilty of this groundless charge against us be brought to justice.

"4. That we be compensated, at the expense of these guilty persons for the time we have lost, for the injury to our health and the suffering we have undergone. . . ."

The time will come where these proposals will be granted with interest. As for the complete clearing up of the Reichstag fire and the finding of the real incendiaries, that of course remains to be done by the People's Court of the future proletarian dictatorship.

In the seventeenth century Galileo Galilei, the founder of modern physics, was brought before a severe tribunal of the Inquisition and was to be sentenced to death for heresy. He cried with firm

\* *Ibid.*, pp. 105 to 122.



conviction and resolution: "And yet it [the earth] moves!"

This scientific thesis later became the common heritage of all mankind!

*We Communists can say today with no less conviction than old Galileo: The earth moves on in spite of everything. The wheel of history turns forward, towards a Soviet Europe, towards a world Union of Soviet Republics!*

*And this wheel, driven by the working class led by the Communist International will be arrested by no measures of extermination, by no jail sentences or death-warrants. It turns and it will continue to turn until the final victory of Communism is won!*

Dimitroff closed his speech with the words which Galileo threw in the teeth of his judges: "And yet it moves!"

Yes, it moves. The working class, the united front, the People's Front are moving with ever-increasing might in the direction of the final victory over the murderous fascist brood. When Dimitroff stood in front of the Reich tribunal, he was infused with this invincible world-embracing movement with all its intellectual and moral superiority of forces, that invincible world-embracing movement which is defending Spain and China from their blood-stained aggressors, which throws back from the frontiers of the Soviet Union any enemy who might try to attack them, which inspires ever broader masses of the people in the capitalist countries and which is establishing in the land of socialism a world of plenty, freedom and peace.

The fascist incendiaries of the Reichstag have turned into incendiaries of a new world war. They have extended their methods from Germany to the whole world.

But as Dimitroff stood up to them in Leipzig, so does the working class at the head of the popular masses stand up to them in all countries. And the intellectual and moral superiority of the anti-fascist forces, incarnated by Dimitroff in Leipzig, is manifest everywhere. On the one side the cowardly brutes who bomb peaceful cities and slaughter women and

children, who undermine the peace by perjury, treachery, provocation and assassination, who mock at and transgress all laws of truth, humanity and decency, and on the other side the simple, proud, incomparable heroism of the working class. Thaelmann, whose spirit was not broken by five years of captivity; Pasionaria, whose flaming life sheds its light ahead of the Spanish people; the Chinese Communists whose families were exterminated by the Kuomintang government and who yet in deepest fidelity to their people have allied themselves with the Kuomintang against the Japanese aggressor; the nameless Spanish woman who, when she was told of the heroic death of her husband, replied to the general of the People's Army: "I have only one demand. There is a gap in the ranks now, give me a rifle that the gap may be filled!"; the nameless Chinese driver who drove a Japanese troop transport into an abyss and died together with the enemies—thousands, tens of thousands of such examples could be quoted without ever reaching an end.

*This unprecedented intellectual and moral superiority of the working class movement is the strongest guarantee of its victory.* That is no mere consolatory phrase; it has been proved a thousand times by actual reality on the Spanish and Chinese battlefields and all over the world. Undisputed is the higher fighting morale of the fighters for liberty, undisputed the greater spirit of self-sacrifice, persistence, power of resistance and determination of the men and women who defend liberty against servitude, justice against injustice, civilization against barbarism.

*We may pay a terrible price in victims and suffer temporary defeat; in history the just cause, the nobler spirit, the higher morale wins.* In the end Mephistopheles loses the diabolic game, in the end truth, freedom and justice win.

Thus did Dimitroff win a victory in Leipzig. Thus will the rising working class vanquish the brutish barbarism of rotting capitalism.

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# Neutrality of the Scandinavian Powers Is Aid to the Aggressor

BY R. MAGNUS

THE COPENHAGEN CONFERENCE OF THE  
OSLO STATES\* AND THE LEAGUE

**T**HE small countries which are situated to the North and Northwest of Germany do not desire to be caught by the conflagration which threatens from the Central European crater of war. Their peoples expect from their governments a policy which shall ensure peace and safeguard their homes from destruction and death.

The governments of these countries relied upon the League of Nations as a protector of the small nations. They developed, within the framework of the League, economic cooperation, and some of them—such as the Scandinavian countries—political cooperation also. This by no means suited German fascism, so long as this cooperation appeared to offer difficulties in the way of its war plans.

On July 1, 1936, the League called off sanctions against Italy. Instead of now pressing for a strengthening of the League, in order to obviate any further ignominious concessions to fascism, the Oslo states drew a directly contrary conclusion. They stated in Geneva that, while the League Covenant was so incompletely and inconsistently applied, they must reserve for themselves the freedom to abide by it or not. Switzerland

land had the League solemnly release her from any obligations to adopt measures against an aggressor, which might arise from the Covenant, and proclaimed her unqualified "neutrality." Representatives in Geneva of the Scandinavian governments supported Switzerland's action—a blow to the League system—with the object of securing from it for themselves justification to proceed likewise. This weakening of the League by a policy of so-called neutrality afforded the fascist aggressors great satisfaction.

A few weeks after the League's disastrous revocation of sanctions against fascist Italy, the German and Italian fascists attacked the Spanish republic which in Geneva had declared, side by side with the Oslo states, for "neutrality." And in March, 1938, there followed the military occupation of Austria, which had sought security in bilateral pacts with the fascist aggressors.

Despite the fact that it brought menace yet nearer to the Scandinavian countries, the statesmen of these lands once more proclaimed their "neutrality" at their conference in Oslo in April. On May 28, in Stockholm, the five Northern states, including Iceland, solemnly signed new neutrality provisions, which cancelled the obsolete ones of 1912. Nevertheless, this by no means appeared to have dissipated their sense of insecurity. The Scandinavian governments then convoked the first political conference of the Oslo states, which took place in Copenhagen on July 23 and 24. With regard

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\* So called because of the commercial agreement which was concluded in Oslo, Norway, December 22, 1930, between Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg.

to the outcome of this conference, the *Deutsche Diplomatisch-Politische Korrespondenz*, an official voice of the Nazi government, had the following to say:

"One should not underestimate the fact that 35,000,000 people in Europe have renounced the conception of collective security."

Of course, these 35,000,000 had done no such thing, for the simple reason that they had not been consulted. It is true, however, that the seven governments which were represented at the conference reiterated their earlier declarations that the sanctions system was not to be considered as binding. They decided to secure from the next meeting of the League the right for their governments freely to decide as to their participation in sanctions. They went even further than did Switzerland, which had merely asked that right for herself alone. The conference defended the conception that "the non-obligatory nature of sanctions decisions shall apply not only to one group of powers, but to all members of the League of Nations." Small wonder that Mussolini's *Giornale d'Italia* stated delightedly that:

"The decisions of this conference form a new, definite step towards the final elimination of the League of Nations, for, without sanctions, Geneva's decisions would have a purely doctrinaire significance."

In his Reichstag speech on February 20, 1938, Hitler had already expressed his satisfaction at the Oslo states' retreat from collective security in the following words:

"The earnest efforts made towards genuine neutrality which we may observe in a number of European states fills us with profound and sincere satisfaction."

The Copenhagen conference concluded its deliberation with the announcement that "the international situation affords grounds for the gravest anxiety." But its own decisions were essentially suited to deepen this anxiety. The decisions embodied further concessions to the fascist

aggressor, and encouraged him to proceed against the weaker powers.

The change which has taken place during recent years in the foreign policies of the Northern countries is the result of the weakening of these states under the increased pressure of fascism. It represents the interests of the most reactionary forces in these countries, forces which are not concerned with the maintenance of peace but with the highest possible profits from armaments manufacture, which do not seek the security of these powers as against a fascist aggressor but rather an internal approximation and a diplomatic rapprochement to German fascism, the subjection of the Scandinavian working class and the inclusion of the Scandinavian powers in the Hitler-front against the Soviet Union.

The Scandinavian governments seek to justify their present tendency by the shortcomings of the Western powers. They frequently stress in their newspapers Chamberlain's recent warning to the smaller and weaker powers not to expect protection from the League. All this, rather than undertake an energetic struggle against this delivery of the smaller nations into the hands of the fascists.

However, the above reasons do not suffice entirely to explain the change in direction of Scandinavian foreign policy, which has also taken by surprise considerable sections of Social-Democracy. Behind this "new policy" stands the reactionary bourgeoisie, working together with Hitler fascism and with the pro-fascist elements surrounding Chamberlain, and influencing the Socialist and democratic governments of the Oslo states in a multitude of ways. The fact that German fascism finds this "new policy" worthy of praise shows clearly enough whom it would benefit.

If the Oslo states maintain that the League of Nations is too weak to ensure them peace, how can they feel more secure with a League which they have still further weakened by their own attitude? Why not rather cooperate towards strengthening it, and thus obtain



increased security for themselves? Dr. Munch, Danish foreign minister, declared in a recent interview that, so long as the four Scandinavian powers—and others with a like standpoint—adhere to it, the League cannot become a one-sided combination, an "alliance." Thus it would appear that the significance of the participation in the League of those states which are "free from alliances" is not that of combining with the powers which can form an effective defense against fascist aggression, but—to prevent the democratic powers from forming "an alliance" against the fascist warmongers! The agreement of ideas regarding the League of Nations between Dr. Munch of Denmark, the Norwegian foreign minister, Koht, and Colonel Beck, Polish foreign minister—which was reached upon the occasion of Beck's visits to Copenhagen and Oslo immediately following the Copenhagen conference—indicates that some of the foreign ministers of the Northern countries are aligning their policy with that of those states which represent in the League the policy of Hitler Germany.

#### THE "NEUTRALITY" WHICH KNOWS NO FOE

Dr. Cohn, legal counsellor to the Danish foreign ministry, stated the theory behind this "neutrality" at a congress of the League of Nations Union in Copenhagen, amidst vigorous applause from the Polish delegation, as follows:

"Neo-neutrality, in its opposition to war, need make no theoretical or practical distinction between aggression and defense."

This delightful theoretical conception led in practice to the fact that, at the Brussels conference of powers on the Far Eastern conflict, in November, 1937, the representatives of the Scandinavian governments abstained from voting on the resolution declaring Japan to be the aggressor. A few days after the Copenhagen conference the Dutch government decided to recognize Franco officially and the Danish government appointed its

former consul at Madrid as its "unofficial" representative to Franco. Whereupon the Swedish reactionary press followed with the proposal that the Oslo states should persuade the Spanish government to surrender Republican Spain to Franco, "on humanitarian grounds."

The Danish Radical Party deputy, Vanggaard, stated with cynical candor at the Inter-Parliamentary Congress in Stockholm, last August:

"The Oslo states wish to be free with regard to any sanctions which may be imposed in the future; they desired clarity, and have returned to the policy of neutrality which, in principle, recognizes no difference between aggressor and the country attacked and which is therefore essentially different from the original ideal and definition of the League; to attempt to weaken disturbers of the peace by means of sanctions." (*Politiken*, August 16.)

The Social-Democratic Swedish Foreign Minister, Sandler, broadcasting on April 4 last, said:

"Having grasped the fact that 'peace on earth' is too great a task for our strength, we can now concentrate on peace in the North.

"No power should reckon on having us or one of us either for or against him. The North must be deleted from the calculations of the general staffs. . . . Has the North any common enemy? With complete justification, the answer is 'No!' Would it then show any cleverness to behave as though we had an enemy?"

The Scandinavian peoples do not ask their governments to organize "peace on earth," but they do most emphatically ask them to safeguard "peace in the North." After all, the North is not up in the moon—it is on the earth, and in closest proximity to Hitler Germany. This dangerous proximity is by no means removed by crying: "Please, omit us from all your calculations!" No country is nowadays in a position to ensure its "deletion" from the calculations of the fascist aggressors, and particularly so when a country possesses resources

which are coveted by the fascist armaments industry. Swedish iron ore and Danish food products by no means lose their allure for German imperialism because of the simple fact that certain Scandinavian politicians have decided to behave as though they have no "common enemy."

For even Sandler cannot deny that peace has an enemy; and the enemy of peace is likewise an enemy of the Northern lands. But anxious Scandinavian foreign ministers fear to name him, wherefore at their conferences he is never mentioned. But the organ of the Norwegian Labor Party, for example, has never hesitated to name the foe, as for instance:

"It is fascism which makes every understanding impossible; it has led to the tremendous arming of recent years; it has brought about insecurity and war, and it threatens the freedom and independence of the smaller countries."

Immediately following the invasion of Austria the Copenhagen *Socialdemokraten*—usually prepared for any surrender—actually, in its first shocked terror, gave the geographical direction whence the foe would come: "The great insecurity which reigns in the world, and whose center lies not far from Denmark, makes vigilance necessary." It is fascist Germany which lies "not far" from the Danish frontier. It looks upon Scandinavia as a "sparsely populated area," most conveniently situated.

Now and again, German fascist literature itself lifts the veil from the calculations of the Nazis which directly threaten the Scandinavian lands. In a book entitled *Der Ostseeraum*, by W. W. Piel, published by the Macht und Erde Co., Leipzig, appear the following paragraphs:

"When a state occupies such an important political-geographical position as Denmark, it must reckon with becoming a seat of war in any conflict between greater powers.

"The Reich attributes particular importance to keeping the Baltic Sea free for undisturbed commerce with the Scan-

dinavian countries, whether during war or peace. The Reich obtains important food products and raw materials from there. Scandinavia forms an important area of supply for the German Reich, which perhaps has even greater significance than the Donau area.

"With these words we have pointed out the great question of Scandinavia's destiny, which is still all too little known even to the Scandinavians themselves. To continue to be lulled by illusions may lead one to experience sudden surprise; for however often one may proclaim and emphasize neutrality, one must also be able to defend it in emergencies."

And the German naval magazine, the *Deutsch Marine-Rundschau*, has revealed to us those calculations which are not being made together with the Scandinavian statesmen:

"In order to carry out an effective blockade of Soviet Russia, Germany will have to send a fleet to the North with orders to cut Soviet Russia's Arctic communications, and perhaps to establish a base for her naval and air forces on the Murmansk coast. . . . In all probability, that country will have the advantage which strikes the first blow and is prepared, without ceremony, to overlook the rights of small countries."

German fascism has its concrete plans, and is systematically developing them. Germany demands that North Schleswig be once more cut off from Denmark and delivered over to Germany, also the military fortification of the Aland Islands, which belong to Finland, for Germany to use as a base, and plans to occupy Narvik in Northern Norway in the event of war, in order to safeguard the transit of iron ore from Sweden. Hitler Germany is making every effort to bring Finland under her domination, to prepare Denmark for eventual capitulation, to gain control of the Baltic Sea, and to blockade the Norwegian coast. In this manner Germany wishes to get her clutches on Scandinavia and to isolate her from her natural allies.

In the light of this menace to Scandinavia, declarations of neutrality can serve only to aid the aggressor. In this

situation, the Scandinavian countries must defend their very existence, and must therefore take care that they do not lose their national independence. In order adequately to resist the rapacious aggressor, they need the support of other powers and of the League of Nations. As Litvinov has pointed out, what the declarations of neutrality really mean is that these countries renounce the aid of the League and of their friends, and invite anyone who so desires to assault them. The Northern countries are about to saw off the limb, on which they are sitting, from the trunk which alone could afford them support.

#### WHAT KIND OF NEUTRALITY?

The policy of the Northern states, in the event of a war, does not want to make any distinction between the assailant and the assailed. In this manner the Scandinavian foreign ministers and diplomats deceive the people regarding the manner of the next war. Ethiopia, Spain, China and Austria have already been the objects of aggression by the powers of the "axis." Would it still be a matter of indifference to Scandinavian statesmen as to who is the aggressor and who the victim, if Hitler's Germany were to attack their countries?

Any great war which German fascism may launch in Europe would be bound to involve the Scandinavian peoples, which means that the fascist aggressor would not leave Scandinavian territory outside his military calculations and plans. Could the danger of a German occupation of Scandinavian territory be averted by a declaration of neutrality? An interesting answer to this query is supplied by a retired major-general of the Danish army, A. Tuxen, in an article on neutrality in the *Berlingske Tidende*, a well-known Danish daily newspaper, from which we quote the following:

"But even if it were possible to remain neutral, at the beginning of the war, the danger would by no means be overcome.

"If, in the course of war, things went badly for Germany, Denmark's neutrality would again be imperilled, partly be-

cause the menace from Germany's enemies could become effective, and partly because it would then become indispensable for Germany, for purposes of sheer defense, to assure herself of Denmark."

In any case, the Scandinavian countries will be threatened by Germany. Whether it be by a Germany launching aggression, or by a Germany which is experiencing difficulties in war, the Scandinavian countries will be drawn, materially and strategically, within the orbit of her conduct of the war.

There can be no repetition of the situation of 1914-18, in which the Scandinavian "neutral powers" supplied both sides with goods. That world war which fascism will have brought about will be dependent upon supplies of material which Germany cannot furnish from her own resources. Germany will need the raw materials of the Scandinavian countries right from the beginning of the war. Therefore Germany will exert every effort to secure a tight hold, politically and militarily, over her Scandinavian "area of supply."

In 1914, imperial Germany did not hesitate, in spite of all neutrality treaties, to invade Belgium and Luxembourg in order to secure an advantageous military base. It is generally accepted that fascist Germany will proceed with even less scruple than did German militarism in 1914 to override all treaties, agreements and pledges. It is quite certain that Hitler Germany will not concede the "neutrality" of the Northern countries, but would endeavor to utilize them as war bases against the Soviet Union. And what is there to prevent her achieving this, if not only reactionary circles of the Scandinavian bourgeoisie, but also the Scandinavian democratic governments are so willingly adaptable, when even now they repudiate collective security and give the potential aggressor to understand that he will not meet with any substantial resistance? Thus does the ostrich plunge its head into the sand—as though it had no "common enemy"—and keep it there until the beast of prey severs its neck.



In the face of increasing peril, the Scandinavian states have declined their sole means of salvation, namely, to take an unequivocal stand against the fascist aggressor who renders their neutrality impossible.

By their repudiation of the system of sanctions they have reserved to themselves the right to supply German fascism with all that it requires and demands. The freedom of trade, which the governments of these states allegedly regain through their attitude, upon a closer view resolves itself into freedom of trade for the reactionary, capitalist elements—freedom, purely from motives of profit, to support warmongering fascist Germany, and thus to gamble away the independence of the Scandinavian countries. Their “neutral” attitude therefore really implies that a belligerent Germany shall be able to receive ore and cellulose from Sweden, foodstuffs from Denmark, chemical products from Norway and timber from Finland.

But it will not only be the supply of foodstuffs, machines, arms and raw materials for armaments manufacture which will take place under the sign of “neutrality”; the aggressor will also be handed the advantages of the Scandinavian merchant services, the Danish waterways, Finnish and Swedish islands and the Norwegian coast. “Neutrality” will thus be converted into a “most favored nation” policy to the advantage of the aggressor—a policy which German fascism is even now impudently urging. And this policy, in turn, would rapidly merge into active support for the fascist aggressors’ war moves against the Soviet Union. By means of this policy of surrender on the part of the Scandinavian countries the German aggressors are virtually presented with Scandinavia—primarily Finland and Sweden—as “supplementary bases.” Not only are the ore mines handed over to the fascists, by means of this policy, but the airports, the harbors, the means of transport and, finally, human beings.

Once the fascists are allowed inside, they will never quit. In order to con-

solidate their hold, they will abolish democracy, install puppet governments, and, with the aid of most reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie, will institute a ruthless reign of violence. An old proverb counsels us to “fight beginnings.” If the Scandinavian governments do not resist the beginnings—if they start right off with concessions, which must necessarily lead to further ones—they will, one fine day, find themselves wholly within the enemy’s power.

Germany insists that public opinion in the Scandinavian countries should immediately conform to “neutrality,” and adopt a favorable attitude towards the fascist regime in Germany. Not long ago, the *Voelkische Beobachter* demanded that the Danish trade unions and their press cease their “hostile attitude towards the new Germany.” German fascism interferes more and more actively in the internal affairs of Scandinavian countries. Propaganda is carried on among the peoples of those countries by means of pamphlets and leaflets printed in Germany in the various Scandinavian tongues. The Northern powers are compelled to suffer the most outrageous insults. German cruisers patrol the Norwegian coast off Norvik, investigating possibilities of preventing the transport of ore to Britain. Recently, German army airplanes practiced air attacks in front of Stockholm upon two Swedish merchant vessels. Flights by German aircraft over Scandinavian strategic areas, unannounced and “unofficial” visits by German war vessels to Scandinavian waters and ports for mapping purposes, are of regular occurrence. And the “neutrality” of the Scandinavian countries permits all this without a murmur of protest. Surely there can be no grounds for believing that governments which now endure without complaint such outrages to their national integrity, would, in the event of war, display greater decision, while German bombing planes were flying over their cities to reinforce the German fascists’ claim to requisition Scandinavian territory and its resources.

By such means does German fascism

test the complaisance of the Scandinavian governments. By means of a widely extended network of propagandists and agents, by German-Scandinavian "cultural societies," by means of its relations with pro-fascist elements among army officers and its connections with finance capital, the big landowners, the nobility and the royal families, German fascism seeks to undermine and control the internal and foreign policies of the Scandinavian governments, thus preparing the ground for the overthrow of democracy in the North.

"Neutrality" necessarily leads to the provision of raw materials and food-stuffs to the aggressors, to the provision of armaments also, and the concession of the use of strategic territorial bases; and finally to the toleration or even approval of the occupation of Scandinavian territory by these aggressors. Thus we come to the final and fatal consequences of Scandinavian "neutral" policy. While the Scandinavian governments have elaborated technical neutrality regulations, they have done nothing to provide for mutual assistance. For once they choose to follow their own paths, as far as their neighbors of the League are concerned, why not extend this policy of desertion to include their nearer neighbors? If under fascist pressure they allow themselves to repudiate their obligations to the League, why should they reveal greater loyalty among themselves when once German fascism begins to condemn cooperation among the Scandinavian countries? Is it not far more probable that, in the event of German aggression, each would abandon the other? For a "neutral policy" means that Sweden and Norway would calmly look on while Germany proceeded to the military occupation of Denmark. And the Scandinavian countries would remain "neutral" if an uprising of fascist generals, with foreign aid, took place in Finland, in order to prepare the way for the occupation of Finland by fascist Germany. Such would be the policy of "non-intervention," as applied to Scandinavia—a policy which was publicly advocated by the Danish

Social-Democratic prime minister, Stauning, in his speech in Lund last year.

"Neutrality" of such a type and with such consequences splits the forces of peace into small helpless sections, and opens wide the door of one's native land to the fascist foe. As Comrade Litvinov pointed out in his speech in Leningrad, the aggressor countries, in the event of war, would compel these countries, who have already been instilled with terror, to forego their neutrality and to serve them the day after mobilization.

#### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AND THE POSITION OF THE WORKING CLASS IN SCANDINAVIA

After Sandler, in his broadcast speech last April, had requested the general staffs to omit Scandinavia from their calculations, after he had promised that the Scandinavian countries would not form a defensive alliance, he concluded, with a sigh, that "as the world is today, we cannot avoid some risk, however we may act." At that time—shortly after the occupation of Austria—the foreign policy of the Scandinavian countries was at the parting of the ways. Notwithstanding the weakening of the official policy of collective security, the conception was maturing of a Scandinavian defense alliance against fascist aggression. In spite of the vicious hostility of the Danish premier, Stauning, this idea found so much support that the central organ of the Swedish Social-Democracy, on January 19, 1938, wrote as follows:

"One may confidently assert that the idea of Northern defense is finding wide approval among large sections of the people in Sweden. When Fredrik Ström, in his speech in the First Chamber, spiritedly advocated a defensive alliance he ran no risk of being repudiated either by his party or his constituency."

Immediately following upon the invasion of Austria, substantial supplementary sums were voted for military expenditure in all four Northern parliaments. The Swedish Social-Democratic

Minister of Commerce, Sköld, diverging from Sandler's standpoint, opposed a "dogmatic neutrality," and received support within his party for this attitude. And, finally, it was the Swedish delegates who asked the Labor and Socialist International for measures which would strengthen the League of Nations.

Nevertheless the governments of the Scandinavian countries chose the other path. At the Copenhagen conference, they chose to replace the "risks" of the League of Nations by the far more certain risks of isolation. They formed no alliance to maintain peace, but rather a collaboration for the toleration and support of the fascist aggressor, to whom they surrendered without a battle. They molded their policy in accordance with the aggressor's. Collectively and individually, they yielded weakly. They have begun to adapt their foreign policy to the interests of their most reactionary capitalists, and thus to serve the interests of German fascism. This cannot but have its effects upon internal policy as well; and thus one may have to reckon with attacks upon democratic forces, and attempts to filch the rights of the Scandinavian peoples.

While it is the most reactionary elements of finance capital in these countries—elements which are connected with fascism—which have prepared the way for this policy of treachery to peace and the national independence of the Scandinavian countries, it is the Social-Democratic coalition governments which are implementing this policy. Of the seven Oslo states, there are six in which Social-Democrats form part of the government—Holland is the only exception. In four of them—Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Belgium—the Socialists name the premier.

The majority of the Socialist Party leadership, however, in these countries where Socialists form part of the government, care not a straw for the resolutions of their own International in favor of strengthening the League of Nations. This surrender to fascism in their foreign policy is not less weighty

in its significance than was the surrender of the Italian, German and Austrian Socialists to fascism within their own countries. The matter here at stake is, in the last resort, the future destiny of democracy and socialism in the Scandinavian countries.

#### THE DEFENSE OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES

It is the working class of the Scandinavian countries who must oppose this surrender to the fascist breakers of the peace. The Scandinavian countries are completely capable of protecting themselves against fascism. It is precisely those features of these Northern countries which make them such coveted booty for the fascist aggressors, which constitute their strength. The four Northern countries possess important industries, superabundance of raw materials, and self-supporting agriculture and fisheries. Their great territorial expanse—about 815,000 square miles—is over three times that of France. The North stands in the front rank in iron exports and is one of the chief purveyors of war material. Scandinavia's joint mercantile marine comes third in the world's list, after Great Britain and the United States. Scandinavia is the greatest purveyor of timber, supplying 85 per cent of the demand on the world market for wood and 71 per cent for cellulose, which latter is made from wood pulp. The North exports more pork than any other country (212,000 tons to Canada's 57,000), and more fish (400,000 tons to Britain's 230,000 tons).

The natural backbone of the struggle of the seventeen million inhabitants of the Northern countries for freedom and independence are the trade unions. The unions have been growing rapidly of late, and have reached a total membership of nearly two million, made up as follows: Sweden, 850,000; Norway, 350,000; Denmark, 500,000; Finland, 70,000. These unions work a good deal together, as do also hundreds of peasants', cooperative, democratic, cultural, women's and youth organizations. In spite of the sabo-



tage of Socialist Party leaders, the conception of unity of action among Communist and Social-Democratic workers is making more and more headway. Anti-fascist united action is beginning to take form through the movement of solidarity with Republican Spain, which has yielded particularly extensive results in Sweden and Norway.

A number of working class newspapers have begun to reveal the disastrous consequences of "neutrality," and the misleading nature of its advocacy. As Senator Branting, a Social-Democrat, whose conspicuous work on behalf of Republican Spain is well known, has stated in the Swedish parliament:

"The fascist states are seeking to surround themselves with quasi-neutral states whose task it will be during a war to supply them with raw materials. We desire no such neutrality."

This statement definitely expresses the viewpoint of the mass of the workers, irrespective of party affiliation, and also finds considerable support among bourgeois-democratic sections of the population.

All these people must recognize the peril in its entirety. The fascist states will not be content with merely obtaining raw materials from the quasi-neutral states, but will exert every effort in order to subordinate these countries entirely to their war plans and subject them to the alien rule of Germany. The timely recognition of this danger is the first step towards its prevention. The front of the enemies of fascism and war is quite capable of preventing Scandinavia, in the event of a war made by Germany upon any League states, from providing the aggressor with raw materials and foodstuffs, and becoming a political and military appendix to Hitler's Germany. Such a front could

make it certain that Scandinavian territory would be powerfully and resolutely defended against any attempt by the aggressor to make use of it. It could organize effective resistance to the threat to the Northern countries from German fascism and to the jeopardizing of Scandinavian independence caused by the policy of obsequious "neutrality"; and, by its opposition to fascism's increasingly far-reaching demands, it could prevent Scandinavia, in the event of war, being used as a military base by Germany and eventually becoming subject to fascist Germany's rule.

The working classes of the Scandinavian countries, united for action, would be able to compel a change in the present foreign policy of their governments. And the more strongly they proceed to the defense and extension of democratic rights and liberties, the greater chances of success would they have in compelling this change. They can secure a reversal of the ruinous policy of capitulation and can utilize the Socialist positions in the cabinets in order to strengthen the League of Nations and the system of collective security. The working class is in the position successfully to exert pressure upon the Scandinavian governments so that they shall actively support the Spanish Republican government and the people of China against their aggressors.

The interests of the Scandinavian working class and of the Scandinavian peoples demand a continuation of Northern cooperation and adhesion to the security pacts of other democratic powers, in order to realize an effective defensive alliance against fascist aggression. It is the democratic and working class organizations themselves which can provide the preliminary conditions and the basis for such an alliance, by means of cooperation in all spheres in each single country as well as in all Scandinavia.

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# Hitler's War of Intervention in Spain And the Forces for Peace in Germany

BY WALTER ULBRICHT

**T**HE heroic and self-sacrificing struggle of the Spanish people against the fascist invaders has strengthened the self-confidence of the anti-fascists in Germany and has encouraged them in their resistance to the warmongers in their own country.

When, in 1933, at the Leipzig trial, Comrade Dimitroff raised the banner of the unity of all forces in the struggle against fascist barbarism, Hitler's opponents gained new courage. When, in 1936, the radio announced that the fascist insurgents had been repulsed from Madrid, and that the Spanish people's army, supported by the International Brigades, had formed an unbreakable wall around the Spanish capital, a wave of enthusiasm swept the working class quarters of German towns. This was the beginning of a change in mood of the German people. Madrid had supplied proof that fascist troops, although technically superior, might still be beaten militarily by the armies of freedom.

Hitler's and Mussolini's war in Spain, and the heroic struggle in support of the Spanish democratic republic, had a tremendous effect on the thought and entire existence of the German people. The attitude taken toward affairs in Spain became the testing point for measuring one's attitude in favor of or against peace, freedom, progress, for or against Hitler fascism.

This was shown in the following various ways. Large masses of the German people began to realize that German fascism did not desire "equal rights" for

Germany, but that in fact Hitler was *an aggressor*, who was interfering in the internal affairs of Spain, in order to plunder the country and *to win strategic positions for a war against France and for gaining fascist rule over Europe*. All the way from the working class right into bourgeois circles, the realization penetrated that Hitler was set on dragging Germany into a mad war-adventure which could end only in utter defeat.

It became clearer to the German people just why the frightful sacrifices were being made at fascism's behest. Hitler's war in Spain, which absorbed huge quantities of German war material, led to a yet more rapid militarization and restriction of the whole existence of the German people. It became more and more obvious, in other words, that the fascist war policy was the cause of the growing distress among the people.

*Therefore, the fear of war grew among the people, and thus the opposition to Hitler embraced wider circles than ever before.* Whereas formerly only certain sections of the Catholics, the peasantry and the middle class were dissatisfied, this dissatisfaction now affects the main masses of these categories. The far-reaching agreement between the Communist Party of Germany and the Social-Democratic groups in the struggle against Hitler's warmongering policies made possible better, more comradely co-operation. Furthermore, owing to restraint and privation, and the peril of a national disaster as the result of the fascists' war policy, *new circumstances*

*have arisen making for an alliance of the working class with the peasantry and middle class.*

#### GERMAN FASCISM'S IMPERIALIST WAR AIMS IN SPAIN

Hitherto, the Hitler government had made its preparations for war on the plea of the "provision of employment," and had hypocritically maintained that its large-scale arming was not for aggression but "the protection of the German home." However, the continual dispatch of war materials and of forces of the German army to Franco could not be kept secret from the German people. Numbers of Germans took the Nazis at their word, when they had said that armaments were only for home defense; they pointed out that there was no single frontier between Germany and Spain, and asked: "What has Germany to gain in Spain?" The anti-fascists enhanced their whispering campaign to the effect that blame for the Spanish civil war lay on Hitler and Mussolini, but for whose armaments and troops Spain would now be a peaceful country.

Comrade Dimitroff, General Secretary of the Communist International, showed, in his article on the second anniversary of the heroic struggle of the Spanish people, that the German fascists had adopted the old plans of German imperialism, which, even in the period of the imperialistic world war, prepared for the occupation of Spain. As early as in May, 1933, the Nazi general Faupel—later to become Hitler's envoy to Franco—wrote, in an article in the armaments industry's review, *Wisser und Wehr*, that the Iberian Peninsula, "because of its geographical-political situation, is of decisive importance," and proceeded as follows:

"Spain, through its possession of Morocco, controls the Straits of Gibraltar. The peninsula, together with the Balearic Islands, commands the Mediterranean, and therewith the French and Italian power routes. From the point of view of naval strategy, the Balearic Islands are the keypoint of the western Mediterranean."

And at the same time the director of the Nazi party's press department in Spain stated in a memorandum:

"A glance at the map will reveal the strategic importance of Spain in a war between Germany and France."

What were the objectives for which Hitler fascism set up its bases in Spain and prepared for the fascist uprising?

In his speech in Wuerzburg, on June 27, 1937, Hitler gave the following reason for his armed intervention in Spain:

"We need a nationalist government in Spain, in order to ensure for ourselves Spanish ore."

In this manner he sought to convey the impression that the war would help the German people. Despite the fact that Hitler's propaganda—that the conditions of the German workers would be improved by the conquest of colonies—had had some effect even among the workers, such illusions faded the longer the war continued. In spite of the exploitation of Spanish ore by German fascism, the critical scarcity of raw materials in Germany increased.

Unfortunately, the German people are not sufficiently aware of the identity of those German capitalists who are most interested in the ore mines and other industrial undertakings in Spain, and who therefore were most directly concerned in a fascist putsch, which would enslave the Spanish workers for the sake of an increase in their profits. It was particularly after the World War that German large-scale capitalists concentrated on the exploitation of Spanish mineral wealth.

A joint-stock company—the "Aktien gesellschaft fuer Bergbau, Blei, und Zinkproduktion zu Stollberg in Westfalen"—was organized for the purpose of exploiting the lead, zinc, silver and mercury resources of Spain. The majority of stock in this company was held by the German industrialist Otto Wolff, who was later entrusted by Hitler with a number of other important foreign business enterprises. He was also a mem-



ber of the supervising commission of the steel trust. And this latter, in its turn, is connected with the Cologne banker Schroeder, one of the chief financial backers of the Nazi party before 1933, and who in his turn has close relations with the Henry Schroeder bank in Great Britain.

Schroeder is also connected with the "Frankfurter Metall-Aktiengesellschaft," upon which is represented a number of leading German trusts such as the I.-G. Farben, through Bosch, the Siemens company—which owned fifteen big concessions in Spain—and representatives of the largest German banks. But on the "Frankfurter Metall-Aktiengesellschaft" are also represented *important representatives of British finance capital*, thus forming the connection with the well-known Rio Tinto Company.

Thus we may see that Hitler's intervention in Spain is not concerned with "the honor of Germany" but the interests and profits of those German trust magnates who believed that their interests in Spain would be affected by the fact that the Spanish workers obtained more rights and higher wages through the People's Front. The effort to gain this Spanish ore is being paid for with the death of many soldiers of the German army and the squandering of vast quantities of raw material in the form of war supplies.

#### EXPOSURE THROUGH EFFORTS OF GERMAN WORKERS OF DISPATCH OF ARMA-MENTS TO SPAIN

Hitler fascism sought by every possible means to conceal from the German people the facts relating to the dispatch of German troops to Spain and the supply of war materials to Franco. The greatest importance therefore attaches to the *regular exposures of fascist war supplies* through German seamen and dockers, as well as the reports coming from German war factories and from Spain.

*Refusal of seamen to man ships carrying war supplies to Franco* became more and more frequent. In spite of offers of

extra pay and bonuses, the crews were determined in their refusals, so that, in one particular instance, the Gestapo arrested an entire ship's company. One seaman stated, "As far as I'm concerned, they can pay as much as they like—I'm not going to let myself be shot in Spain for Franco's sake. I have been there once, and I'm not going again." When the German vessel, the *Henrica*, was lying in Rotterdam harbor, her German crew went on strike, refusing to continue the voyage. The ship had on board a cargo of munitions for Franco.

News items also appeared in the fascist press that many aircraft engines, supplied by a German factory, and destined for Franco, *were faulty*, likewise a number of tanks. One seaman reported that on his ship they were carrying two naval speed-boats of a new type. "In unloading one of the boats," he wrote, "the sling broke and the boat was smashed against the quay."

Anti-fascists in the German army sent reports on the transport of troops, and particularly on the dispatch of German aviators, gunners and technicians to Franco. It was reported, for instance, that in March, 1938, alone, 54 German fliers left for Spain, and that 85 pupils of the flying school in Lüneburg were being prepared for the journey. In February, 1938, 80 fliers from the Magdeburg flying school were sent to Portugal.

In a conversation between a civilian and his friend, a soldier, the civilian expressed doubt as to the stories of the *desertions of German soldiers*. Whereupon the soldier replied: "But it's true. Among us, also, no one wants to go to Spain. If asked, they always decline."

A leaflet circulated in Hamburg states as follows:

"There can be no greater disgrace for any German soldier, for any German, than to be in the service of alien capitalists and generals as a bought mercenary and serf."

From Brandenburg it was reported that on the barracks bulletin board a slogan against the transport of troops to Spain was chalked up.

There is more and more talk, as time goes on, of those who go to Spain and never return. In the *Schwarze Korps*, the organ of the S.S. (Black Guards), and other Nazi papers, one sees more and more obituary notices of members of the Black Guards or of the Storm Troops who have "perished in an accident." The bodies of officers in the army are brought back to Germany in zinc-lined caskets or wooden boxes. From seamen's reports we gather that a considerable number of these dead are returned to Germany. One soldier writes that from his company, an armored car unit, fifteen men were sent to Spain recently, of whom five have already died. One of the symptoms of the temper of the German soldiers in Spain is the common saying that their extra money—by which they mean that part of their pay which is to be paid them on their return to Germany—will be just enough to buy a coffin. More and more, people in Germany are asking why no casualty lists are published. But the names of those who have fallen are passed on from mouth to mouth.

Thus, spreading the news of the dispatch of war supplies, of the transportation of troops, of the numbers of the dead and wounded and those taken prisoners, all helps to bring to the German people the realization that Hitler is actually carrying on a war.

The contradiction between the interests of German fascism in Spain, and the growing fear of war among the masses, has been shown most plainly since the German naval bombardment of Almeria.

Whereas previously workers would refuse to increase their contributions to this or that fund, for which they are constantly being pestered, on grounds of family needs or similar domestic reasons, since the shelling of Almeria they frequently refuse because the collections are not for the people but for war uses. A worker will say: "Why should we finance Franco and his generals?" Or, perhaps: "We haven't anything for Franco's army—the Winter Aid money all goes to Spain anyhow."

In one textile mill a couple of sixteen-year old girl workers were indignant when asked for contributions and said: "We won't give a penny for Franco!" Social-Democratic workers have reported that: "In discussions on Spain, workers always mention the low wages and heavy deductions in connection with Hitler's help to Franco."

This growing opposition finds expression, not only in the whispering campaigns, but in slogans chalked on factory walls and elsewhere, and the distribution of illegal leaflets. In one mine in Upper Silesia, for instance, when the wagons came up out of the pit, one was seen to have, written upon its side, "Nothing for us—everything for Franco!"

On another were the words: "Hitler and Mussolini held back at Madrid. Let us all join the People's Front!" On the day when Mussolini arrived in Munich, one saw, in two prominent places, the lines:

"Only the international peace brigades can help against Hitler's and Mussolini's war parades!"

Various slogans also frequently express the deep distrust among the German people of Hitler's allies, of the "Berlin-Rome Axis."

#### SOLIDARITY ACTION FOR SPAIN IN GERMANY

Formerly, discontent and opposition under the Hitler dictatorship were related chiefly to immediate economic questions or the various suppressive measures. But since Hitler's war in Spain began, the everyday fight against privation and exploitation is more and more linked up with the struggle against the cause of all these evils: the fascist war policy. In April, 1937, the Commission for the Formation of a German People's Front expressed this viewpoint of an ever-growing number of the German people, in its manifesto from which we quote the following:

"The German people does not desire any incitement against other peoples, it

does not desire any conquest of foreign territory. . . . We welcome the fact that in spite of the severe conditions the forces of resistance to the intolerable burden of armaments and shameful tyranny are growing ever stronger among our people. The German people will not be sacrificed for the Spanish reactionaries and for the armaments frenzy of Hitler fascism."

The heroic struggle of the Spanish People's Front against Hitler's interventionist forces provided, in many cases, the stimulus to common action among Communists and Socialists in Germany. For example, a report from one district states as follows:

"The war in Spain gave rise to a discussion between Social-Democrats and Communists. The Social-Democrats are in favor of supporting the People's Front in Spain, so that it remains in power. This question of Spain also led us to a discussion of the situation of the German workers."

A report from a German metal factory contained the following:

"Now the Social-Democrats are of the opinion that the most important thing is for us to unite. The Social-Democratic comrades asked the Communists whether we could not take up a collection for Spain, where the money should be delivered, and how we could be sure that it would arrive in Republican Spain. . . . We also discussed together as to how we could spread the truth about Spain, and what slogans should be passed on by means of the 'whispering newspapers.'"

In many German factories, the anti-fascists, on their own initiative, proceeded to organize collections on behalf of their Spanish brothers. For example, even in the early months of the struggle, collections were taken in Saxon and Silesian mines, in one of them alone 72 marks being raised. The following collections were reported from Central and South German factories: September 19, 20 M.; on September 20, 15 M.; on September 21, 17.65 M.; on September 22, 5 M.; and on September 25, 6 M. In one well-known aircraft factory in North

Germany, 180 marks were collected, and, in a Berlin arms factory, 50 marks.

On the occasion of the Czechoslovakia-Germany football match in Prague, visiting German sportsmen turned over 100 marks for Spain.

Here are some of the collections taken in the summer of 1937: a Berlin arms factory, 40 M.; a Central German arms factory, 53 M.; a Saxon metal works, 45 M.; a North German shipyards, 75 M.; a chemical works in Central Germany, 36 M.; and in the Krupp's works, 78 M. In one factory, a worker handed over his fifty pfennigs with the remark: "Perhaps this'll pay for one cartridge, at least." A peasant living near Berlin volunteered to make sausages, as iron rations for the republican troops, if they could be got to them. When it was explained that this was impossible, he donated a mark.

In spite of the large number of collections taken, the Gestapo was to discover but few of them. As far as is known, arrests were made of persons, alleged to be concerned in these collections, in two departments of the Krupp works in Rheinhausen, in the Osram lamp works in Berlin, in the Garbe-Lahmeier factory in Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), and in the Waldenburg industrial area.

Among the most heroic supporters of solidarity, however, were the German anti-fascists who hastened to Spain, in order to offer their lives to the Spanish People's Army for the victory over Hitler and Mussolini. Some had been released only a short time previously from concentration camps, yet already volunteered for the International Brigade. Some traveled on foot, passed six frontier stations on the long journey to Spain. Unfortunately, a few were captured by the Gestapo when attempting to cross the German frontier, en route for Republican Spain. For instance, one worker, who had endeavored to cross the frontier, was sentenced by the local court in Karlsruhe (on the right bank of the Rhine) to one year and two months' imprisonment, and another to one year. Both these workers stated in court that



it had been their intention to go to Spain to join the International Brigade. In Saarbruchen, two workers were sentenced to five and six months each because they had tried to get across the frontier in order to reach Republican Spain. For the same reason, four young workers were sentenced to four years' imprisonment each in Constance, in Baden. They were arrested when just on the point of crossing the frontier, and turned over to the Gestapo. "Their sympathy with the Spanish Republic," stated the indictment, "was such that they did not hesitate at trying to gain their end, to get to Spain, without a passport."

But the chief tasks of the German anti-fascists must be fulfilled in Germany itself. In what this task consists is best explained by the following quotation from a leaflet circulated by supporters of the German People's Front in Frankfurt:

"Every fellow-countryman, whether employed in a factory as worker or office-worker, or whether he be teacher, peasant, civil servant or doctor, *has an opportunity to spread the truth*. Everyone has the opportunity of fighting against Hitler's preparations for war. Every pfennig in increased wages, which the worker, office employee, or civil servant may obtain, is a pfennig less for armaments. Every improved treatment a doctor may prescribe for a patient, every good medicine he obtains from the sick fund, is so much less money for Hitler to steal from the social-welfare funds for armaments.

"Every peasant who violates the coercive measures of the National Food Control disturbs and hinders the whole fabric of preparations for war. Every teacher who can communicate to his pupils the true German traditions, who reveals to them the greatness of the classics, who eradicates the 'war spirit' in the youth, is sowing the seed of free, progressive thought. Every lawyer who, in his daily practice, will not allow right to be perverted, who seeks real justice, is contributing to the struggle against the fascist dictatorship. Every student who stands by freedom of science and re-

search, in his classroom or laboratory, is a fighter for peace. . . .

"Let us think of the real Germans, our comrades, who are fighting on the side of the Spanish Republic for democracy and liberty, who with their blood have washed clean a portion of the guilt of all of us. Let us think of the German men and women who are in the prisons and concentration camps, of all those who have lost their lives in the struggle against the dictatorship.

"Let us be united in the struggle against the brown-shirt system, let us forge the German People's Front, to make Germany once more free and reputable; once more to make Germany a land of culture, of freedom and of peace."

#### TO ASSEMBLE AND ROUSE INTO ACTIVITY ALL FORCES FOR PEACE AND LIBERTY

Although the propaganda carried on by distribution of illegal leaflets against Hitler's war policy has been successful and has influenced large numbers, although the propaganda broadcast by the illegal German Freedom Station has reached the farthest corners of the country, although, both in the factories and on the countryside, the legal opportunities for resistance to the war policy and the burden of armaments have been better utilized, yet the organization of this resistance is still limited to the efforts of comparatively few active anti-fascists. In his article on the second year of war in Spain, Comrade Dimitroff made special reference to the German Communists and anti-fascists, when he wrote:

"On the occasion of the second anniversary of the heroic struggle in Spain it is the duty of every labor organization, of every individual active in the labor movement, of every honest anti-fascist politician, to examine the causes that prevent adequate and effective aid being rendered to Republican Spain and that prevent the working class from fulfilling its full duty to the Spanish people."\*

\* Georgi Dimitroff, "Two Years of Heroic Struggle of the Spanish People," in *The Communist International*, August, 1938. This was also published as a pamphlet under the same name by Workers Library Publishers, New York.

The experiences of the struggle in Germany against Hitler's intervention in Spain show us that the Communist Party of Germany has not yet grown to the measure of its great task. The Communist forces in the country have not yet been adequately brought together, the unification of Communists and Social-Democrats is not yet looked upon by all Communists as the most important immediate task confronting them.

Thanks to the heroic struggle of the Spanish people, the idea of unity has become deep-rooted among the working class. While German Communists and Social-Democrats were fighting shoulder to shoulder outside Madrid, staking their lives for freedom, the Communists and Social-Democrats in Berlin, the Ruhr district and in Hamburg concluded agreements for a common struggle against Hitler's war policy.

But all this is but the bare beginning of the establishment of large-scale unity between the Communist Party of Germany and the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, and of the unification of all forces making for peace and liberty. Although members of the Prague executive of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, Hertz and Ollenhauer, visited Republican Spain and there made their declarations of solidarity, no practical action followed. Even Friedrich Stampfer has recognized the immediate peril of a world conflagration, owing to Hitler fascism, but they have all so far failed to tell us what should be done right now in Germany against Hitler, the chief warmonger. These same Social-Democratic leaders—who, in their propaganda, cannot do enough for bourgeois democracy—stand by with idle hands when German fascism pursues a war against the democratic republic of Spain, and while war is being prepared against the Czechoslovakian republic. We can remember an appeal which was issued by the Prague Executive in 1934, from which we quote the following:

"The bases of division will vanish. The struggle for the overthrow of the dictatorship cannot be carried on other-

wise than as a revolutionary struggle. . . . Unity of the working class will be a compulsion imposed by history itself."

Now, in the face of Hitler's armed intervention in Spain, the preparations for the attack on Czechoslovakia, and of the menace of a new world war, is it not high time that the Social-Democratic leaders, who drew up and issued this appeal, act in accordance with their words? It is true that they now criticize adversely the "Non-Intervention" policy of the Chamberlain government, but their own attitude, their resistance to unity of the working class and the creation of a German People's Front movement, is also a sort of "Non-Intervention" policy.

There are some Social-Democrats, Democrats or Catholics who fear that the uniting of all anti-Hitler forces might restrict the development of their own organizations. But this does not apply, as the People's Front is not in itself an organization, but, on the contrary, depends upon the initiative of illegal groups, which should be developed as strongly as possible, and upon its affiliated organizations. We Communists, in fact, are very desirous of seeing the Social-Democratic, Democratic, Catholic and other organizations—and particularly their leaders—pursue much more strongly their policies of opposition to the fascist warmongers, and aid by their own constructive proposals the alliance of forces in Germany making for peace and liberty.

Today, when among the toiling people so much dissatisfaction exists at the outrageous burdens of war and armaments, when the workers are so hostile to Goering's slave regulations, when Catholics and Protestants are resisting oppressive measures, when soldiers and officers of the army are dissatisfied with Hitler's foreign alliances, when the peasants rebel against coercive economic measures, when even certain capitalist circles regard Goering's war economy as injurious to German economic interests, and even Nazis indignantly condemn war profiteering and the large-scale capitalists—today

it is high time that the Communist Party of Germany and the Social-Democratic Party of Germany step forward together before the people, to protect the true interests of the German people from the fascist war provocateurs, in order to save Germany from the dangers of war.

The most effective aid the German working class could render the Spanish people in its struggle for liberty is to strengthen the efforts now being made for the creation of a great movement in Germany itself for peace and liberty—a mass movement which would utilize the

organized initiative of the most active anti-fascists, Communists, Social-Democrats and Catholics, but which can only develop as a mass opposition movement if it makes use of all the legal positions in the fascist mass organizations, and appears before the masses with such legal demands as shall also strengthen the doubts of the working people, who are National-Socialist toilers, regarding fascist policies; and if it brings about unity of workers and employees in industry as well as unity in the countryside.

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### REVOLUTIONARY THEORY

“Revolutionary theory . . . becomes immaterial if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illuminated by revolutionary theory.” — STALIN, *Foundations of Leninism*.

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# The Struggle of the Austrian People For Their National Independence

BY PETER WIEDEN

**H**AVING occupied Austria by brute military force, the German fascists have established there a rule of foreign terror. Not only those masses of the people who follow the Socialist, Communist and Catholic parties, but to an increasing extent the overwhelming majority of the Austrian Nazis themselves regard the dictatorship of German fascism in Austria as intolerable and openly describe it as an *alien tyranny*. Even that small minority of the Austrian people which had taken up a positive attitude towards the "Anschluss" are now becoming more and more convinced as the weeks go by that the German potentates regard their Austrian subjects not as part and parcel of the German nation but as a conquered race.

The clandestine *Mitteilungsblatt*, published by the Austrian Nazis, addressed the following words to "Reich Commissar" Bürckel:

"You want to render us harmless at all cost. That is, you want to use the Gestapo agents put at your disposal to assist you in fulfilling your tasks, for the purpose of persecuting us, the 'old fighters' among the Austrian Nazis. Why? Because we possess sufficient feeling and dignity to regard it as unspeakably humiliating to be treated like a province conquered by the force of arms in which you as Commissar of the occupying forces exercises unlimited power. We do not wish to deceive ourselves and see quite clearly where this road leads; it leads not to a union of Germany and Austria but to the subjection of Austria to Prussian domination. We shall not al-

low ourselves to be deterred from our struggle. Our slogans are: Struggle against the Reich Commissar! Struggle against the subjection of Austria to a *Prussian yoke*! We want to administer our own land ourselves!"

These accusations made by Austrian Nazis against the German rule are most illuminating. They show that even Austrian Nazis are aware of the *national* character of this oppression and that they revolt not only against increasing exploitation, and insecurity and the rising cost of living, not only against the economic spoliation and social decay of Austria but also against the fact that it is foreign, alien, Prussian commissars who are putting all these infamous measures into operation. Even Austrian Nazis look upon the tremendous sharpening of poverty and slavery and general worsening of conditions as the characteristic concomitants of an alien tyranny.

## THE NATURE OF ALIEN DOMINATION

The appointment of German commissars in Austria, the pillaging of the Austrian national bank, the extensive expropriation of Austrian enterprises in favor of German heavy industry, the ruthless spoliation of the natural resources of Austria, the persecution of all sincere Austrian patriots, the dismemberment of Austria into a bundle of German provinces, the blotting out even of the old historic name of Austria—all this is sufficiently characteristic of the *essence of German domination*.

German fascism is applying in Austria methods generally used towards colonial peoples. The wages of the Austrian workers are even lower than those of their German brothers. The Austrian unemployed are being deported to Germany to labor as slaves. On pretext of anti-Semitic action the fascist robber gangs are conducting a gigantic raid on the national wealth of Austria. German capitalists are grabbing all the commanding positions of Austrian economics and are remoulding the economic life of Austria to suit their requirements. The Goering speech about the "laziness of the Austrians" showed very clearly that the German conquerors regard the Austrian as their slaves, as "natives" who have no rights except the right and the obligation of working themselves to death for their foreign masters.

Alien rule means nothing else but *national oppression*. The dictatorship of Italian fascism over the Italian people, though it does challenge the hatred of the masses day after day, is yet not regarded as alien domination; but in South Tyrol, where the ally of Hitler Germany is oppressing a section of the Austrian people, the fascist dictatorship is at the same time Italian alien domination, national oppression. If even the Nazis, in their illegally published documents, describe Hitler's rule over Austria as "the Prussian yoke," then it must be obvious to everyone that the Austrian regard the German conquerors as aliens, as foreigners, as belonging to a different nation.

But their revolt against the "Prussian" domination is by no means the expression of a national hostility to the Prussian people, but merely legitimate national resistance to "Prussianism," to military despotism of the Prussian junkers, to the rule of the sabre and the barrack-yard, to the crude barbarism of the war years, to the Prussianism evolved by the Hohenzollerns, which later proved itself to be the misfortune of the German people and which is now being extolled by the Nazis as the incarnation of the German spirit.

Not without good cause did Marx and Engels speak of a "Holy German Empire of the Prussian Nation." The Austrians have never belonged to that nation and to that Empire and they have good reason to describe the alien domination now weighing them down as "Prussian." The "Prussian" is for the Austrians the strongest incarnation of the foreign, the nationally different, German. As long as Germany was merely a neighboring state, the Austrian felt themselves fraternally allied to the Germans, but since Hitler Germany attacked and subjugated Austria, the Austrians are becoming conscious of all dividing factors, of all national differences, of all the characteristics which now confront the Austrians in the shape of "Prussianism."

That German fascism has established an alien rule in Austria is not disputed by any anti-fascist; but there certainly are anti-fascists who fail to understand correctly the nature of this alien rule, because they are influenced by pan-German prejudices. Thus a sincere German anti-fascist, the Catholic Prince Lowenstein, in an article published under his name on June 16 in the *New Weltbuehne*, while taking up a positive attitude towards the efforts made by the Communist Party of Austria to bring about the unity of the Austrian people in the struggle against Hitler, said that after the occupation of Austria the struggle for self-determination had lost its significance. German fascism had established an alien rule not only in Austria but in all Germany:

"Not the fact that a Bavarian commands in Saxony and a Prussian in Vienna constitutes 'alien domination'; alien domination is constituted by the fact that the SA, SS and Gestapo are in command in general."

According to this conception "alien rule" would be merely a circumlocution to denote all fascist rule by violence. But it is quite clear that the Austrians are in revolt against the fascist rule of violence not only in the same way as the Germans, but also because this power is wielded by aliens, by foreigners, by con-

querors. Austria was occupied by foreign troops and is being oppressed by foreign commissars, and that is what constitutes alien domination, that is what makes the difference between the rule of violence of Hitler fascism in Austria and the rule of violence of Hitler fascism in Germany.

If one accepted the view of Prince Loewenstein, then one might call all counter-revolutionary oppression "alien rule;" but in that case it would be incomprehensible why for example the Chinese people have formed a national united front against the meance of alien rule by the Japanese and that it formed that united front even with forces which a very short time ago were themselves oppressing the people of China. There is a difference between simple rule of violence and alien rule; the Chinese like the Austrian people are well aware of this difference. From Schuschnigg and Chiang Kai-shek the people defended its democratic liberties and its social claims; from Japan and Hitler Germany it is fighting for its *national independence* as well.

Another anti-fascist journal, *Heute und Morgen*, published in Switzerland, argues with inexplicable fervor against the conception that Hitler Germany was violating the "historical right" of Austria to her independence. This is what they say:

"If the Anschluss of Austria is a violation today, it is so not because some historical right has been infringed but because a progressive historical development has been trampled underfoot. This progressive historical development—the only one which can rescue Europe and the world in general from the present chaos—is the union of the nations on the basis of socialism and with it the true development of the nations and of their national character as evolved in the course of their history."

It is quite correct that only socialism is capable of a complete solution of the national problem and that only in the Socialist Soviet Union is the free development of all nations safeguarded to-

day—but in Europe we still have a good way to go before we get to socialism. But have the nations no right to their independence here and now? Do we not fight for the self-determination of the nations even under capitalism? Shall we advise the nations defending their right of self-determination and their independence from the attacks of Hitler that they ought to wait for the victory of socialism and meanwhile give up their "historic right," their *national* right to independence?

It appears to us that it is quite impermissible to construe a difference between "historical right" and "progressive historical development" in connection with the occupation of Austria. Before the invasion by German troops the Austrian people had begun to unite for the defense of its right of self-determination and of Austrian independence against German fascism: that was undoubtedly a *progressive historical development*. This development roused fresh forces of resistance to German fascism, favored the democratic transformation of Austria, strengthened the positions of the working class—whose ultimate goal is socialism—and was enacted on the sphere of the "historical" right of the Austrians to self-determination and to an independent state of their own.

How is it possible to overlook, in the era of imperialism, the tremendous significance of national struggles for emancipation, their tremendous importance for the whole progressive historical development of mankind? Wherever a people defends its right of national self-determination against fascism, that most cruel and sanguinary form of imperialism, it is rendering a service to historical progress, undermining the rule of putrescent capitalism and is in the long run laying the foundations of a socialist revolution.

In the national struggle of a people against fascism the working class finds allies even within the ranks of the national bourgeoisie and can overcome quicker than in other circumstances the prejudices which have been instilled into



the minds of the great masses of peasants and of the urban middle class to bias them against the working class movement. The Austrian peasants, artisans, small tradesmen and intellectuals have, in the weeks preceding the military invasion of Austria by German fascism, convinced themselves that the workers were the staunchest defenders of Austrian independence against alien domination; hence the illegal cadres of the revolutionary working class movement of Austria are now finding a great measure of support and protection among these sections of the population. The struggle of the Austrian people against Hitler fascism is today above all a struggle against alien domination, a struggle for the right of national self-determination and for the restoration of national independence. This struggle strengthens the revolutionary working class movement, anchors it profoundly in the masses of the people and prepares the ground for the seeds of a future revolution. *By their national struggle for emancipation against German fascism the Austrian workers are weakening the Hitler system and are helping the whole of the revolutionary movement, the whole of progressive historical development—and that is the decisive factor for us Communists.*

Are the Austrians part of the German nation?

The muddled attitude certain anti-fascists have taken up towards the question of Austrian independence—an attitude by which they, even though unintentionally, are playing the game of Hitler fascism—is due mainly to mistaken conceptions of the nature of a nation. Many democrats and Socialists underestimate the tremendous importance of the national question in history; others adopt more or less uncritically the various theories of bourgeois nationalism and are afterwards disappointed and indignant if reality contradicts these theories. Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin have very thoroughly investigated the national question and have come to conclusions which no anti-fascist can afford to dis-

regard; these conclusions enable us to understand the devious and often very intricate national development of each individual people and to draw the correct political inferences in the interests of the anti-fascist struggle for liberty.

Hitler fascism and certain democrats and Socialists as well, who have unfortunately fallen victims to a pan-German ideology, have decided that the Austrians are a part of the German nation. And behold! The Austrians reject this, they resist the "Prussian yoke," they fight against alien domination by the Germans and demand the right of national self-determination. "So much the worse for the Austrians!" the pan-German ideologist retorts with irritation. "Your demand for independence is reactionary, it is federalist, it is utterly impermissible!" But all this undesirable and incorrect talk will not change the fact that the Austrians detest the Prussian yoke and do not want to be Germans, but Austrians. That they so persistently regard themselves as Austrians, that their demand "Austria for the Austrians!" finds an echo even in the ranks of the Austrian Nazis, that they fail so completely to fit into the design of the pan-German ideologists, must of course have some reason. It will be useful to investigate these reasons and answer the question: "What actual justification have the advocates of the pan-German ideology for claiming that the Austrians are a part of the German nation?"

The first reply to this question is almost invariably: "The Austrians speak German and therefore they are Germans!" The Nazis have dug up the old slogan: "Where the German tongue is spoken, there are the bounds of the German nation." According to this theory the nation is not limited to a territory and not bound up with the state, economic entities, historical traditions nor peculiarities of mentality and culture. According to this theory not only the Austrians but the German-speaking Swiss, Alsations, Transylvanians, Americans and Volga Germans are also "part of the German nation."

According to this theory there ought to be no Croats, for they speak the same language as the Serbs, no Irish and Americans, for they speak the same language as the English, no Mexicans and Brazilians, for they speak the same language as the Spanish and Portuguese. But as a Croat, an Irish, an American nation undoubtedly exist, the community of language alone is obviously insufficient to characterize a nation as such.

The Nazi themselves do not rigorously adhere to this theory as they do not for example regard the German-speaking Jews as members of the German nation; they have therefore invented an additional, mysterious and elusive "community of the blood" which is alleged to constitute the inmost essence of a nation.

Imperialist Hitler fascism has invented a much more comprehensive "theory" in order to justify, ideologically its insatiable greed for power. Wherever "German speech and German customs" ruled, wherever German colonizers subjected the native population or influenced it, there the German nation holds a valid right: the Dutch and the Flemish, the Lithuanian and Esthonian, the Czech, Slovak and Slovens peoples are all destined to be merged with the German nation because at one time a German ruling class held sway in their countries. Hitler fascism claims the territories belonging to these peoples as "old German land." It intends forcibly to Germanify these peoples, *i.e.*, enslave them and rob them of their own national life, as were the Wend people who were entirely engulfed in the German kingdom. Hitler fascism passionately attacks the "Western and Jewish theory" that each nation has territorial limits; the German nation as distinct from all other is according to the Nazis not bound to any specific territory.

It is obvious that this "theory" is merely a transparent *masquerade of German imperialism*; that it does not define the essence of what a nation is but dissolves it into a brown fog out of which only the points of the German bayonets peep out.

#### WHAT IS A NATION?

Unfortunately the theories of the Social-Democrats are no less misleading and nebulous. The best-developed Social-Democratic theory of nationality was evolved by the "Austro-Marxists," Karl Renner and Otto Bauer. Renner defined the nation as an "association of persons thinking and speaking in the same way, a cultural community of modern men no longer bound to the soil." Bauer declared that the nation is "a relative community of character"; the national character is "the complex of physical and mental characteristics which distinguish one nation from another"; the character of men is "determined by their destinies." He came to the conclusion that "the nation is the entity of human beings united by the community of their destinies into a community of character."

In his work *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* Comrade Stalin replied to these Austro-Marxist theoreticians:

"We thus have a community of national character based on a community of fate and not necessarily connected with community of territory, language or economic life.

"But what in that case remains of the nation? What national community can there be among people who are economically disconnected, inhabit different territories and from generation to generation speak different languages?

"Bauer, by divorcing the 'distinctive feature' of nations (national character) from the 'conditions' of their life, sets up an impassable barrier between them. But what is national character if not a reflection of the conditions of life, a coagulation of impressions derived from environment? How can one limit the matter to national character alone, isolating and divorcing it from the soil that gave rise to it?

"A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture. . . .

"It must be emphasized that none of the above characteristics is by itself sufficient to define a nation. On the other hand, it is sufficient for a single one of

these characteristics to be absent and the nation ceases to be a nation." \*

The "national community of destiny" mentioned by Otto Bauer does not exist from the dawn of time; it is brought about by the economic, political and cultural conditions in which the life of a nation is lived. The "national community of character" is not a mystic substance which can be transferred unchanged from one country to another and from one continent to the other; it is as Stalin says, the reflection of the living conditions of a people. And finally every nation has come into being in certain conditions, suffers changes in certain conditions and can pass away again in certain other conditions. Modern nations with their well-defined national feeling and national conscience could come into being only in the epoch of capitalism; the requisite of their birth was the political awakening of the masses, universal education, the elementary urge of the bourgeoisie to break through the narrow economic limits of feudalism, the claim of the peoples to decide their own fate.

*It was only on the soil of capitalism that the modern nations could be fully developed.* Their birth and development did not proceed in a vacuum but in certain circumstances determined by varying political, economic and cultural conditions. Take for example the birth of the Serb and Croat nations; both nations speak the same language and are descend from the same race, but they have developed into nations in different circumstances. The Serbs became a nation in the struggle for emancipation from Turkish autocracy, the Croats in the struggle against the Hapsburg empire; the Serbs embraced the Orthodox and the Croats the Catholic faith, the Serbs were a peasant people with very slight cultural traditions, the Croats through their aristocracy and later through their

intellectuals were bound up with the Central European culture. All this has resulted in the formation not of a united "Illyrian" nation but in spite of their common origin and common speech to the formation of two nations, the Serb and the Croat.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AUSTRIAN NATION

Having quoted these examples we now return to our question: what actual justification have the representatives of pan-German ideology for regarding the Austrians as a part of the German nation. When the French revolution stimulated the first great national movements in other countries of Europe, the Germans and Austrians were living in different political and economic conditions. True, there was a general community of culture between Germans and Austrians, but at the same time a specifically Austrian culture and mentality was developing in many forms. At this period it was as yet quite undecided whether the uniting or dividing factors would be the stronger.

In the struggle against the absolutism of the Habsburgs and the Hohenzollerns, against the reactionary rule of prince-lings in tiny states, against everything that Marx and Engels summarized as the "German misery" all revolutionary and progressive forces favored the democratic union of Germans and Austrians. But the revolutionary movement met with disaster, the revolution was defeated and the struggle between the Habsburgs and the Hohenzollerns for supremacy in Germany ended in 1866 with the victory of the Hohenzollerns. Austria was thrown out of the German orbit of development for good. The union of the German nation in 1871 did not include the Austrians who now became more and more absorbed in their own Austrian state.

After 1866 and 1871 the idea of the Anschluss faded out in Austria. True, the leading party of the Austrian bourgeoisie, the Liberals who for decades ruled the bureaucratic police state and

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\*Joseph Stalin *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, pp. 8 and 10-11, International Publishers, N. Y.



regarded themselves as the mainstay of the state, did stress again and again that they were "German," but did so not in opposition to the idea of the Austrian state but in order to stake out their claim to hold all the dominating positions in Austria. Their "Germanism" consisted merely in a stubborn and obstinate opposition to the just demands of the Slavs who were just awakening to national consciousness, their liberalism merely in opposition to the clericalism of the Catholic church. Their opponents were the feudal-clerical parties and groups who unconditionally supported the Austrian state and who were inclined to accede to the national demands of the Slav.

It was only in the struggle against the Slav claims that a pan-German wing developed, the extremists in which at one time played with the idea of an Anschluss and for a time took up a negative attitude towards the conception of an Austrian state. The germaophile nationalism of these groups was due to the fact that representatives of the Slav nations had gradually won their way into the bureaucracy and that it was no longer the privilege of the German-speaking Austrians to occupy all the available posts in the state machinery. It was mainly the sons of the Austrian intellectuals and professional men, the future judges, barristers, professors and bureaucrats of all kinds who in the reactionary struggle against the Slav nations for the plums of the civil service and other privileges of the German-speaking "master nation" manifested pan-German opinions.

But it was not these German nationalists but the Christian Socialists, *i.e.*, the representatives of the urban lower middle class and of the peasants who grew into a mass party and swept away the old Liberals; and these Christian Socialists were thorough Austrian nationalists. In the struggle against the Christian Socialists the mass party of the Austrian working class in its turn grew great and strong; their leaders, Victor Adler, Pernerstorfer and others, had come from the German nationalists

and brought with them pan-German ideology from their old party.

In the years which preceded the World War the German nationalists had gone through a transformation which left them Austrian patriots. They saw the task of Austria in waging the struggle and ultimately a war against the Slav nations to secure for the German "master nation" of the dual monarchy the hegemony over Southeastern Europe. In 1914 a blood-stained patriotism united all parties of the German-speaking Austrians.

Old Austria perished by her national antagonisms. Her further development was fatally influenced by the fact that the Austrian Social-Democrats were as unable to solve the fundamental problem of the old Austrian state, the national problem, as had been that old state itself. Within the Social-Democratic Party two trends of opinion existed: one was Renner's who held that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was a type of state superior to the national state type; that it was, so to speak, a realization of the international idea in a state—and the other Bauer's conception, who held that the Austrian state of mixed nationalities was doomed to destruction and that finally the only course open to the German-speaking Austrians would be the union with Germany.

Renner idealized the Hapsburg monarchy which was a prison for all nations under its scepter, while Bauer predicted its unavoidable destruction and with it also the destruction of Austrian Social-Democracy. That there might be a third, a revolutionary solution, was entirely beyond the horizon of the Austrian Social-Democrats. This third revolutionary solution would have been a struggle of the Social-Democrats for the granting of the right of self-determination to all nations. Such a struggle would have made it possible to prevent the dissolution of the Social-Democratic forces into national Social-Democratic Parties and bring about the fall of the Hapsburgs *without* tearing asunder the ties uniting Austrians, Czechs and Hungarians. Both the

monarchist conception of Renner and the pan-German conception of Bauer were obstacles to such a solution and were to a great extent instrumental in chopping up the Danube basin and abandoning it to the rapacious grasp of German and Italian imperialism.

#### THE BIRTH OF THE AUSTRIAN REPUBLIC

The Austrian republic emerged as a new state from the ruins of the Hapsburg monarchy.

During the last years of the World War a profound indignation and dissatisfaction with their German ally had developed not only among the masses of the people but was also widespread among the Austrian bourgeoisie. The Austrian people and great sections of the Austrian bourgeoisie had had enough of the war and wanted peace, a separate peace if need be. Under the pressure of these trends the Emperor Charles sought contact with the Allies; both he and his advisers were apprehensive that after the Russian revolution the monarchy could not resist possible revolutionary upheavals resulting if war dragged on. Only the fear that the Germany "ally" might invade Austria with his armies in the event of a separate peace frustrated these plans.

In the spring of 1918 Clémenceau revealed the secret of these separate negotiations: the German nationalists now regarded the last Hapsburg as a traitor to his country and lost their Austrian patriotism, but the Austrian people wanted peace at all cost, did not want to bleed for German imperialism and wide sections of the Austrian and, especially of the Viennese bourgeoisie, supported the demand for a separate peace. The spokesman of this growing trend, Professor Lammasch, was cheered even by Social-Democratic workers when he stood up against the pan-German warmongers.

What was the attitude of the Austrian people and its parties when the monarchy collapsed, when the Slav nations established their own states and Austria was suddenly left by herself?

The Christian Socialists until the last moment supported the preservation of the monarchy. The German nationalists passed a resolution on October 21, 1918, from which we quote this passage:

"The German people in Austria is determined to decide for itself its future form of government, to form an independent Austrian state and to regulate its relations with other nations by means of free agreements with them."

At the same meeting of the Reichsrat deputies from all German-speaking constituencies Victor Adler declared in the name of the Social-Democratic Party that German Austria should:

"Unite with the neighboring peoples to form a free union of nations if the peoples so desire. If however the other peoples reject such a community or if they agree to join it only on conditions contrary to the economic and national requirements of the German people, then the German-Austrian state—which if left to stand alone would not constitute an entity capable of economic development—would be *compelled* to incorporate itself with the German Reich as a separate federated state."

The demand of the Social-Democrats that a republic be established was opposed both by the Christian Socialists and the German Nationalists; the German Nationalists at that time adhered to the constitutional monarchy of the Habsburgs. It is very useful to recall at the present moment that the German Nationalists at that time made *no mention whatever* of any "Anschluss" to Germany and the Social-Democrats only considered the possibility of the Anschluss as a *last expedient* when everything else had failed.

#### THE WEAKNESS OF THE "ANSCHLUSS" CONCEPTION

It was not until October 30 that the pressure of the masses induced the German nationalists to abandon the monarchy and participate in the establishment of the republic and the Christian Socialists took even longer, until No-

vember 11, before they too abandoned their former position. But what about the Anschluss? Let us hear a leading witness for the Anschluss, Otto Bauer, who was the first Austrian statesman to plead for the union with Germany (as early as the middle of October, 1918), and who remained faithful to the pan-German ideology until his death.

In his book, *The Austrian Revolution*, Otto Bauer enumerated the considerations put forward by the Austrian bourgeoisie which found itself in great difficulties through the disruption of its old economic territory, through the loss of its old hegemony over the Slav nations and through the hostile attitude taken up by the new national states. He added:

"Mightily impressed by these considerations, interests and emotions, wide sections of the bourgeoisie and especially of the intellectuals were as early as the middle of October seeking *consolation* for the collapse of their old domination in the hope of a union Anschluss with Germany.

On the contrary the mass of the working class at that time had no enthusiasm for the conception of the Anschluss although it had been first suggested by the Social-Democrats; the workers had hated German imperialism too profoundly during the war to become enthusiastic about joining the same Germany now the war was over. *It was only on November 9 that the conception of the Anschluss conquered the masses of the workers.*

Otto Bauer says nothing about the peasants whose attitude to the Anschluss was one of indifference if not of hostility. Only a very small section demanded the Anschluss from German nationalist motives; the attitude of the masses however *was mainly determined by economic and social considerations.* Part of the bourgeoisie feared that the Austrian body economic would not be able to stand by itself and therefore sought the union with the German body economic. The alleged incapacity of Austria to live by itself was also the main argument put forward by the Social-Democrats;

this alleged "incapacity" was the pretext on which they throttled the social revolution and as a substitute for it propagated the Anschluss. Finally the working class was prepared to join the German revolution but was by no means prepared to unite with Germany at all cost.

These economic, social and political considerations, and not any motives arising out of German national feeling, also played the decisive part in the further development of Austria. In this connection the so-called "plebiscite" in Tyrol and Salzburg to which the Nazis refer so eagerly today is most instructive. In the stormy weeks of the revolution the reactionary bourgeoisie of the Alpine provinces conceived the idea of seceding from Austria and joining some other, less revolutionary, country.

The so-called "Tyrolese National Council" first approached the Germans but afterwards found it more expedient to negotiate with the Allies and to proclaim its "independence" with the assistance of the Entente powers. The enemies of the revolution in Vorarlberg wanted to merge their province with Switzerland. Considerable sections of the bourgeoisie favored the plan of abandoning Austria to Italy. Similar tendencies were rife in the German-Bohemian districts, where the bourgeoisie of Aussig called in Czech troops to protect them from the revolutionary German-Bohemian workers.

After the victory of the counter-revolution in Bavaria the leaders of the reaction in Tyrol and Salzburg wanted their provinces to unite not with Germany but with Bavaria; they negotiated with the leaders of the Bavarian counter-revolution with a view to establishing a South German monarchy. Instead of taking energetic measures against this counter-revolutionary Anschluss movement, the Social-Democrats, together with the pan-Germans, decided to have a finger in this pie and to turn the demand of a union with Bavaria into the demand of a union with Germany. This led to the ridiculous plebiscite in Tyrol



and Salzburg in April, 1921, in which all parties alike advocated the Anschluss. As a result of this plebiscite the Mayr government resigned under the pressure of the Allies, and the two governmental parties, Christian Socialists and pan-Germans, hurriedly decided not to insist on further plebiscites.

This farcical plebiscite was a clear expression of the fact that the Austrian bourgeoisie put its class interests above all national considerations and that its attitude towards the Anschluss was dependent on the political situation of the moment. In 1921 the Catholic peasants voted for the Anschluss because as a result of the fatally incorrect peasant policy pursued by the Austrian Social-Democrats the reactionary peasant leaders could convince their adherents that a separation from "Red Vienna" and a union with Bavaria, "citadel of law and order," would bring about an improvement of their conditions. The Social-Democratic workers voted for the Anschluss because they kept discipline and followed the instructions of their pan-German leaders who told them that Austria was "incapable of life" and could be saved from economic collapse only by the union with Germany.

#### THE WORKERS AND THE ANSCHLUSS

In the days of the victorious revolution the Austrian workers were in favor of a union with the German revolution but the Austrian bourgeoisie opposed the Anschluss passionately at this period. Let us hear what Otto Bauer says about it:

"Our propaganda which was to win over the United States, Italy and Great Britain to the Anschluss *was frustrated by opposition from within*. . . . The French statesmen were in a position to reply to us that the leading lights of Austrian economic life, the bankers and big manufacturers, assured them day after day that *Austria was in no need of the Anschluss*. . . . The diplomats could easily refute us by calling to witness against us practically the whole bour-

geois press of Vienna and the feeling in great parts of the Alpine provinces. . . . We could not risk it [a plebiscite] because the vehement counter-propaganda of the opponents of the Anschluss conjured up the danger that strong minorities and in some provinces perhaps even the majority of the voters would vote *against the Anschluss*.

When the German revolution petered out, the Austrian workers showed themselves for a long time indifferent to national questions; the Austro-German People's Union (Oesterreichisch-Deutscher Volksbund) which advocated the Anschluss was unable to exercise the slightest power of attraction over the Austrian workers even though the Social-Democrats actively participated in its leading bodies. The Social-Democratic workers of Austria conceived an increasing dislike of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany; they took pride in their higher degree of organization, in their powerful movement, in "their" Vienna with its Social-Democratic administration. Without being nationalists, they were increasingly conscious of their Austrian nationality. No less conscious of their Austrian nationality were the masses of the peasants and the Catholic and Social-Democratic sections of the urban middle class. Only a small pan-German minority took up an anti-Austrian attitude.

When fascism established its dictatorship in Germany, the *anti-Anschluss pro-Austrian feeling of the mass of the people increased considerably*. Only the insane and criminal policy of Austrian Heimwehr fascism and partly also a lack of understanding shown by the Social-Democratic Party leaders in the face of the growing Austrian national consciousness prevented the union of the mass of the Austrian people for the struggle in defense of the independence of Austria.

Thus in the February struggles Austrian workers and peasants confronted each other in the name of Austria, the workers saying, "*Here in Austria the things that are happening in Germany must not happen!*" while the peasant

lads were terribly deceived by the government who told them that an authoritative regime had to be established *in order to defend Austria*. The members of the Schutzbund and the peasant lads in the reactionary semi-military organizations were both prepared to defend the frontiers of Austria against the German fascist but the Dollfuss government in its evil blindness unleashed a civil war.

The guns of the "authoritative" government shot terrible breaches into the independence of Austria. The defeat of the working class brought a catastrophic weakening of the power of resistance of Austria to Hitler fascism. But even the disastrous policy of the Dollfuss and Schuschnigg governments could not lastingly shake the fidelity of the Austrian workers to their country and their people. *From the depths of illegality the workers raised their voices in favor of the independence of Austria and fought ceaselessly for the union of the nation against the threatening Anschluss, against Hitler fascism.* Faced with German fascism the workers abandoned their attitude of indifference to the national question and became conscious of their Austrian nationality—and the same peasants, who in February, 1934, fought against the workers, were now demanding an understanding with them with increasing insistence. In the few days of comparative freedom vouchsafed the Austrian workers immediately before the Hitler invasion a mighty and unforgettable popular movement against German fascism for the defense of Austria was born. Workers and peasants, Communists, Socialists and Catholics united into a great militant community to fight for the freedom and independence of Austria. *It is in the struggle for their freedom and independence that the Austrians grew fully conscious of their distinct national existence.*

#### HOW THE AUSTRIAN NATION EVOLVED

We have described in outline how strongly the national development of Austria was dependent on economic, social and political conditions. This de-

velopment was not such that it had of necessity in all circumstances to bring about the formation of an Austrian nation, but in the existing historical circumstances it did bring about such a result. The process was for many reasons intricate and full of contradictions. On the one hand Austria had for centuries in fact and since 1806 in name, as well, been an independent state on whose soil an independent economic life, an independent culture and an independent mentality had developed; on the other hand, neighboring Germany, technically and economically more advanced, had a great power of attraction for the German-speaking Austrians, painfully aware of the backwardness of the Austrian monarchy and always regarded as Germans in the struggle going on between the nationalities of the Hapsburg empire. Many historical memories were common to Germans and Austrians. Side by side with the baroque and the *biedermeier*,\* with the popular plays of Raimund and Nestroy, with Austrian musical culture, German culture, the works of the great German classics and of the great German philosophers influenced the development of Austrian cultural life and cultural aspirations.

The resistance to the arch-reactionary system of Metternich, allied closely to the German cultural and libertarian movement, inspired all the progressive forces of Austria with the pan-German idea in the decades following upon the congress of Vienna (1814). The revolution of 1848 demanded the union of the German-speaking Austrians with the Germans in a democratic German republic. In the epoch of expanding capitalism when the bourgeoisie revolted against the feudal chains and against the tyranny of the petty princes it was a progressive action to pull up boundary posts and to weld peoples into great nations despite all sorts of differences. But the position was considerably altered in the epoch of decaying capitalism, in

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\* *Biedermeier* — insipid style of German middle class architecture.

the epoch of imperialism; today it is not the desire of the peoples but the insolent violence of finance capital which pulls up boundary marks.

The change was already visible in 1866 when it was no longer the peoples who rose to establish a great German republic, as in 1848, but the *dynasties* of the Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns who began a war for the hegemony in Germany. After the defeat of Austria in this war and the union of Germany under Prussian domination, national development in Austria progressed more and more in the direction of a separate Austrian nationality, without entirely neutralizing however the attraction of the mighty German empire, which far outdistanced the Hapsburg monarchy both technically and economically. We have already shown how the national struggles within the Hapsburg monarchy worked out in favor of pan-German tendencies and obstructed the formation of an Austrian nation. In the war years the Austrian workers learned that not only they but considerable sections of the peasantry and lower middle class hated German imperialism and in 1918 the Austrian people formed its own state. The official ideology of the leading Social-Democrats and of the German nationalists was pan-German but the masses of the people regarded themselves as Austrians.

In the struggle against Hitler fascism the most progressive class of modern society, the working class of Austria, made the independence of Austria a point of their program while the men representing the "authoritative" system vacillated and hesitated until the last moment; while they invented the reactionary theory that Austria was "the second German state," the workers unequivocally and consistently championed the unconditional independence of Austria. For the workers and the great masses of the people the resistance to German fascism was at the same time a *national struggle for liberty*. In this long, weary and contradictory process did the Austrian people grow into a nation.

*That the Austrian people are being*

*oppressed by the same tyrants as the German people does not make it a part of the German nation—but it is linked with the German people in the close and fraternal unity of the common struggle.* The Communist Party of Germany has endorsed the right of the Austrian people to its independence. But was this perhaps an obstacle to the closest and most fraternal cooperation with the Communist Party of Austria? On the contrary: the close ties uniting the two parties were drawn closer still by the common struggle against Hitler fascism which is oppressing both the German and the Austrian peoples. Every revolutionary fighter against Hitler fascism must understand that the national struggle of the Austrian people for its liberation from alien domination, the fighting alliance of the Austrian workers with the Catholic masses in Austria, the growing desire of all sections of the population to rid their country from the iron heel of the German conquerors is one of the mightiest weapons against Hitler.

Shortly before his death Otto Bauer wrote that the reactionary Catholics were planning to dismember Germany after the fall of Hitler and to detach the Catholic provinces from the German Reich. It is quite possible that reactionary Catholics do harbor such plans—but for the time being Hitler is still in power and idle speculations about the future are only a means to divert attention from the present struggle. For the time being the thing to do is to *unite all forces* against Hitler's rule; and the closer we ally ourselves with the Catholic masses, the more difficult it will be at some future date to carry out such reactionary Catholic plans, if they really exist. We think that it is not merely idle but harmful to befog the tasks of the present by speculations about the future. To abandon the struggle for the self-determination of the Austrian people because perhaps some one or other might try to bring about something or other after the victory would be more than childish; in the same way we might abandon the struggle for democracy and



socialism because quite certainly even in the camp of democracy and socialism there will be plenty of enemies, obstacles and difficulties.

We are fighting for the right of self-determination of the Austrian people, for the independence of Austria. What the Austrian people will decide in exercising its right of self-determination after it has won its independence cannot be foreseen today by anyone. That will depend on many circumstances as yet unknown today. It will depend on many circumstances which we cannot today foresee, on the course and extent of the revolution in Austria and the neighboring countries, on the interest and needs of the revolutionary movement.

But what we advocate with the

greatest consistency is the *national and democratic right of the Austrian people to decide its own destinies*. The annexation of Austria by Hitler Germany has, by brute force, brought about a condition which the Austrian people will not accept. Can a Germany liberated from the Hitler yoke maintain that countries conquered by Hitler are part of the German republic and peoples subjected by Hitler are part of the German nation? Anyone taking up such an attitude would cease to be a Socialist, would cease to be a democrat.

*Thus the question of the self-determination of the Austrian people and of Austrian independence becomes a touchstone for every Socialist and every democrat.*

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## In Praise of Learning

By JOSEPH STALIN and V. M. MOLOTOV

Two recent speeches delivered by Stalin and Molotov at a reception in the Kremlin in honor of Soviet scientists and members of university and college staffs. The differences in the aims, work and lives of scientists in the Soviet Union and those of the capitalist countries are clearly portrayed by Stalin and Molotov.

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# The Peasant Movement in Poland

BY S. BOGDANSKAYA

NEARLY a year has passed since the general political strike of the Polish peasants in August, 1937. Neither the bloody fascist punitive expedition dispatched to suppress it nor the innumerable trials of adherents of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" and the savage sentences passed on officials of the organization have succeeded in intimidating the peasants. Nor have the efforts of the Right-wing elements in the leadership of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" to divert the peasants from the political struggle by means of "economic action" been of any avail. The anti-fascist peasant movement in Poland continues to grow and to embrace wider and wider sections of the masses of the peasants.

And this is not a thing to be wondered at, for the living conditions of vast sections of the Polish peasantry have not only not improved but are steadily deteriorating. Their land hunger, their misery, the starvation, the lack of legal protection, have not diminished in the very least; while, on the other hand, the war danger provoked by the fascists, in particular since the seizure of Austria by Hitler, fills the masses of the peasants with increasing alarm.

Moreover, there are already signs of a fresh economic crisis in Poland, although Poland has not yet shaken off the effects of the severe economic crisis of the years 1929-1932 and it was not till the year 1937 that a certain revival of trade (and that chiefly as a result of the growth of the armament industry) was discernible; and even then production in Polish industry had not reached the level attained in the pre-crisis year of 1928.

The official *Gazeta Polska* endeavors to conceal the fact that a new crisis is impending. The more far-sighted conservative organ *Czas*, however, alludes quite openly to the "first storm signals" of the approaching crisis and, in referring to the raising of the workers' wages last year and the "inadmissibility" of "stay-in" strikes, demands that timely steps should be taken to prepare for the crisis.

In April and May of 1938 the index of industrial production fell (in April to 92.4 and in May to 91.7) in comparison with the peak point (95) reached in March of this year (1928=100). Signs of the crisis are also discernible in the sphere of credit. In May of this year the number of unredeemed bills had increased considerably in comparison with April of this year and May of last year.

The number of registered unemployed (which by no means indicates the true extent of unemployment) in the towns and industrial centers, not to mention the eight to nine millions "surplus" population in the country, amounted to 549, 211 in January, 1938, according to official statistics and notwithstanding the fact that industrial production had increased in comparison with January, 1937 (535,-563). Despite seasonal building and work on strategic military defenses in the so-called central industrial area, the figure of the registered unemployed on May 1 still remained at 393,291. Even the *Gazeta Polska* admits that one-third of the population of Poland is "surplus."

The growing adverse balance of foreign trade provides special cause for alarm. For the first quarter of 1938, it amounted to almost 60,000,000 zloty,

that is, as much as for the whole of 1937.

The morsel of bread produced by the village has to be divided into even smaller and thinner slices. In January of this year Deputy Tomaszkevich pointed out before the budget committee of the Sejm that the population of Poland has increased by 10 per cent since 1928, whereas consumption has fallen over the same period by 10 per cent. According to data published in *Tidsen Rabotnika*, the organ of the Polish Socialist Party, no new public works have been initiated this year in the central industrial area. Last year the total of building trade workers was 12,000; this year, 10,000.

Workers are recruited mainly from the ranks of destitute and starving peasants who own very little land and who are ready to work for any wage at all. The capitalists exploit this fact to force incredibly low rates of wages on the workers (40 groschen an hour, that is, less than the extremely low wages paid to those employed on public works).

To complete the picture it must be added that "the scissors," which "shear away" the substance of the village, are widening. The papers are publishing figures issued by the central statistical authorities with regard to the index figure of prices of agricultural products which the farmers sell and of the industrial goods which they purchase (1928=100). In April of last year the index figure for the former goods amounted to 49.5 and for the latter to 66.4. In April, 1938, the corresponding figures were 46.2 and 65.4. "The widening of the 'scissors'" according to *Dziennik Ludowy*, "amounts to 10 per cent."

The approaching agrarian crisis will entail a further process of disintegration and proletarianization of the peasant masses of the impoverished Polish village and with it increased dissatisfaction and readiness to struggle on the part of the peasants.

The events which have been played out since the general strike of the peasants bear witness to the feelings prevailing among wide sections of the peasantry.

The endless trials of those who participated in this strike are continuing up to the present moment. Charges have been brought against 1,960 individuals in the district of Rzeszow alone.

These trials reveal the revolutionary spirit and the high degree of organization displayed by the peasantry during the strike of last year.

As is well known, the government responded to the strike with a bloody campaign by means of which it hoped to settle accounts with the peasantry. "Of course we had to shoot," declared the Prime Minister Slawoj-Skladkowski before the Budget Committee of the Sejm. How bestial was the vengeance meted out to the peasantry which had risen up to protect its political rights is demonstrated from an interpellation and a speech made by Deputy Kzenda Lubelski in the Sejm. He pointed out that the police:

"... liquidated the strike by the use of violence, that they beat up both guilty and innocent, nay, even children and women, with their truncheons... that household furniture, clothes, beds, agricultural instruments, provisions, cooking utensils, and even ikons were destroyed without rhyme or reason. The authorities resorted to methods that are unpardonable in a civilized country. This terrible campaign of vengeance destroyed a whole series of communities. The murders, the bloodshed, the over-filled jails widened still further the gulf between the Polish peasantry and the present government."

The feelings aroused by these acts of repression in the villages are described in an article which appeared on December 24, 1937, in the newspaper *Ilustrowany Kurjer Codzienny* under the caption, "The Government-Uniform Complex."

"Since the punitive expedition village children run away at the sight of any uniform at all... They [the villagers] are afraid for their cabins, which have been destroyed, their horses, which have been beaten, for their stocks. Alas! a veritable trauma has made its appearance with regard to a uniform of any kind which symbolizes the power of the government."



In December, there took place the Congress of the Peasant Youth Organization, which is affiliated to the "Stronitztwo Ludowe." The Congress adopted a resolution against fascism, and also against both "Sanacja fascism" \* and "National-Democratic" \*\* fascism, and in favor of a complete transformation of the agricultural and social conditions of Poland, of cooperation with the workers' movement and with the intellectual workers.

During the last few days of February, 1938, the all-Polish congress of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe," attended by 400 delegates, was held in Cracow. In contrast to previous congresses, not only did representatives of the committees of the central and district organizations of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" take part in the congress, but also representatives of local committees of the organization.

Visitors and journalists were forbidden by the authorities to take part in the congress. The external appearance of the congress hall was in itself enough to demonstrate the close political agreement of the delegates with the ideas of the anti-fascist peasants who died in August, 1937. On one of the walls, which was covered with green baize, was a white tablet on which the names of the "fallen" peasants were set out in long rows. Forming a frame to this tablet were peasant banners, hung with crape, on some of which were blood-red spots.

Peasant representatives from all over Poland attended the congress. About 250 messages of greeting were received from political, trade union and social organizations, as well as from individuals. The President of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe," Matzei Ratai, made the political report in the name of the leadership.

\* The word "Sanacja" means "healing." The Pilsudskists organized a coup d'etat in 1926 under the slogan "Moral healing of the nation." The camp, therefore, of the Pilsudskists—Beck, Slawoj-Skladkowski, and the other adherents of the government—is, to this day, referred to as the "Sanacja."

\*\* National-Democrats, an anti-Semitic fascist party.

He referred to the growth of the influence of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" throughout Poland, including the Western Ukraine and Western White Russia.

"The peasants can't sit down, fold their hands and look on passively at what is happening in Poland," he said. "The peasants . . . appeal to all those who recognize the necessity for consolidating all our forces with the object of bringing about a radical change in the present situation. From our sector of the struggle we reach out a hand to the workers and the intellectuals, to all those who desire that the state shall be based on the masses and on social justice and who are prepared to stand by it in the moment of danger."

One of the most Right-wing leaders of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe," Gralinski, addressed the congress on the subject of foreign affairs. Even he sharply criticized the policy of Poland in relation to Germany.

"There is but a step between us and war," he said. "The masses can place no reliance in the policy of Sanacja. Poland must take its stand by the great democracies of England, France and Czechoslovakia."

The active political spirit of the Congress delegates is demonstrated by the fact that more than 150 individuals took part in the discussion.

"The rank-and-file peasant organizations," said one of the congress delegates (Chwalinski), "are ready to act; what is needed is unity in the leadership. A bloc must be formed of all those elements which regard democracy as their goal."

The resolution unanimously adopted by the congress was not published, since all the editions of the *Seloni Schtandar* and the *Pjast*, the organs of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe," which printed it, were confiscated. The police carried out searches of the flats of the officials of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe," in an attempt to find the resolution passed at the Congress. The contents of the resolution, however, were made known to the broad masses.

It contained the following annihilating indictment of the Pilsudski regime:

"The internal political situation of the Polish state in the twelfth year of the rule of the Pilsudski clique presents a dreadful picture and evokes serious fears for the future. Complete disintegration of the upper, ruling classes, the failure, now obvious to everyone, of the attempt to create a 'camp of national unity,' on orders from above; the lack of all faith in the possibility of maintaining the present state of affairs; the general uncertainty and the increasing efforts to bring about a change in the present situation by means of a revolution (from the Right); the hostile attitude adopted by the population towards the administration as a reaction to acts of loathsome despotism which go unpunished, and the numerous trials for misappropriation of public funds; the misery and the backwardness in almost all spheres of the social life of the country as a result of the policy of the government—that is the picture of the internal political condition of the state, a picture that is particularly calamitous in view of the present tension of the international situation."

The resolution called upon all social, trade union, economic and political organizations "which took their stand on the interests of the state and democracy" to collaborate with the "Stronitztwo Ludowe." The congress expressed the conviction that "the workers would not hold back from the struggle."

Gruschka, the chairman of the Jaroslav organization, at that time in custody in the Przemyśl jail in connection with the August strike, was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" amid acclamation. Matzei Ratai, elected President of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe," declared that the "real President was at present abroad" (he was referring to Witos, an exile from Poland). It is also significant that the Congress expelled from the organization a prominent member, Putko, for strike-breaking the previous August.

Disquieted by the results of the peasant Congress, the Sanacja authorities resorted to a new method of intimidation

in order to prevent the adherents of the "Ludowe" from carrying into effect a peasants' strike. According to the *Seloni Shtandar*, the provincial authorities in the *Voivode*\* of Cracow summoned the local leaders of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" and placed before them a written declaration for their signature to the effect that they had taken cognizance of the warning of the estate manager and were aware of the consequences and penalties which would be imposed by the authorities on "all those guilty of incitement, verbally or in writing, to a campaign for a political strike" or "guilty of any kind of preparations for such a campaign, which constituted a crime according to paragraphs 95, 96 and 97 of the criminal code."

These paragraphs provide for a term of imprisonment up to fifteen years.

These measures evidently proved inadequate. The Prime Minister, Slawoj-Skladkowski, therefore undertook a personal "visit of inspection" first of all to the Cracow and Lemberg districts, then to other *voivodes*. The Polish government at the eleventh hour placed a ban on the great peasant demonstrations which had been organized by the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" for April 24 of this year, the anniversary of the Ratzlawitz struggles at the time of the Kosciuszowski revolt. The government gave permission only for the holding of small peasant meetings in individual localities.

As is well known, great anti-fascist demonstrations were held by the peasants on that day last year, which ended in bloody clashes with the police. In consequence of the government's ban on the holding of peasant demonstrations on any considerable scale, the leadership of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" found itself obliged to cancel the peasant demonstrations on April 24 of this year.

May Day of this year gave proof of a further increase of class-consciousness on the part of the peasants and a growing feeling of solidarity with the workers.

\* Poland is divided into *voivodes* or provinces.

This year more than one and a half million people took part in the May Day demonstrations—and that despite the campaign launched by the Sanacja Polish Trade Union Federation and the National-Democratic “Polska Pratz” against the international proletarian festival, and notwithstanding the ban placed on May Day celebrations by various local authorities. Apart from numerous arrests of Communists throughout Poland, Western White Russia and the Western Ukraine on the eve of May 1, apart from strong concentrations of mounted and foot police in the towns and industrial centers, “cautionary parades” of the mechanized “green police” (special bodies for the suppression of disturbances amongst the masses) were organized in some districts of the Southern *voivodes*. The villages and market towns of Central Galicia swarmed with detachments of police.

Despite all these precautions not only did representatives and delegations of the “Stronitztwo Ludowe” and of the peasant organization “Wizzi” take part in the international proletarian festival but also numerous groups of peasants, side by side with the workers and intellectuals.

In the demonstration of 60,000 people in Warsaw marched a delegation of the “Wizzi,” in spite of a torrential downpour. The demonstrators marched under the slogans: Down with the policy of national betrayal! Bread and work instead of bullets! Down with the National-Democrats! Down with fascism and war! Down with the agents of Hitler in Poland! We demand democratic elections! Long live unity and the People's Front! We demand aid for Republican Spain! Down with Japanese aggression in China!

A particularly large number of peasants took part in the demonstration in Cracow. Numerous delegations of the “Stronitztwo Ludowe” and the “Wizzi” also took part in the demonstrations and meetings in other towns and country districts in every corner of Poland. In Melz a group of peasant girls with red

kerchiefs was to be seen in the demonstration. In Kalisz a delegation of the “Stronitztwo Ludowe” attended a demonstration of five thousand people. The authorities refused to permit the peasants to attend the demonstrations en masse, but large groups of peasants arrived at many places after covering twelve to twenty miles on foot.

The National-Democratic *Warszawski Dziennik Narodowy* described the spirit of the workers' and peasants' demonstration in Lemberg in the following terms:

“When one of the speakers—a Ukrainian Socialist—attacked the Soviet Union, there was such an outburst among the crowd that he could not finish his speech. Towards the end of the demonstration slogans were shouted in honor of the Soviet Union.”

Local correspondents of the papers also described the shouting of revolutionary slogans and the numerous arrests of demonstrators in Warsaw, Lodz (70 arrests), the Dombrow basin, Borislaw, etc.

A number of letters published in the peasant paper *Pjast* provide eloquent proof of the humiliations to which those working for the “Stronitztwo Ludowe” are subjected by the Pilsudskists. In one of these letters, written by a certain Goski, we read:

“I was sent by the leadership of the ‘Stronitztwo Ludowe’ of the *voivode* of Keletzk to the district of Pinczszew to give a short course of lectures on politics, economics and social subjects. I attended the district conference of the ‘Stronitztwo Ludowe.’

“At the end of the conference the police, on orders from an unknown quarter, arrested me and my colleague Benetzki and took us to Pinczszew. From there I was taken under escort to my birthplace in the Opaczszinsk district. I was forced to traverse five districts on foot . . . the whole *voivode* of Keletsk. Twenty-two police officials from eighteen police stations accompanied me; in the end I was handed over to the chief authorities of the village of Mordzszewsk, in the district of Unitszka. I am now recovering at home. The tramping about was a great



strain, for I wasn't even allowed to buy myself anything. On April 5 I fainted in the police station in Czentsien. I wasn't even allowed to call a doctor. I was utterly exhausted, but I was compelled to go on.

"After two more days of tramping under police escort my strength gave out and I fell to the ground. The police dragged me to the police station in Konskie, where a doctor was fetched, who pronounced me to be in an extremely precarious state of health. I asked to be allowed to go on by train at my own expense and even to pay the fare of the policeman, but my request was refused."

Other officials of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" have also described how they have been dragged along from place to place in this ignominious way; this was, in fact, not an individual case, but a method. But such ill-treatment cannot break the fighting spirit of the peasants.

"The peasant is ready to sacrifice and to endure still more for the sake of his principles," writes Stanislaw Benek, who was subjected to a like procedure.

The Pilsudskists, however, work not only with the whip, but also with "honeyed phrases." The abortive "camp of national unity" and the *Gazeta Polska* positively overflow with love for the peasantry. The Vice-Prime Minister, Kutowski, in a speech made in Kattowitz, called in no uncertain terms for a consolidation of relations with the opposition, including the Polish Socialist Party and the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" and hinted that a change in the government was possible. The "Stronitztwo Ludowe," however, sceptically replies to these hints by asking: "Will the words of Pan Kutowski be followed by deeds?"

And sure enough they *were*. A bill was introduced in the Sejm dealing with elections for local self-governing bodies, a bill which, if passed, would bring about a worsening of the present electoral law.

A new symptom of the vitality of the peasant movement in Poland is the "People's Holiday," which was fixed by the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" for June 5 and 6.

The Pilsudskists tried in every possi-

ble way to prevent mass participation of the peasants in this holiday, and to this end it was banned in various places. In a number of places they justified their ban on the pretext of the prevalent foot and mouth disease. In a number of others the district committees of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" only received permission to hold meetings at the very last moment.

Cases occurred in which the local authorities, after granting permission for the holding of meetings, changed the place of meeting which had already been publicly announced. In a good many places the leading officials of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" were summoned before the authorities of their district and they were told what subjects could not be touched upon and what slogans could not be shouted. The resolutions drawn up by the leadership of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" for this day were confiscated, and it was forbidden to read them out at the various meetings and demonstrations.

Despite all these measures the "People's Holiday" was celebrated on a much larger scale than in previous years; the mood of the masses was militant. Meetings and demonstrations were held in 180 districts and attended by one million people. In the central provinces the attendance rose by 100 per cent, in some districts by 200 per cent. Mounted detachments of peasants, detachments of cyclists and the peasant militia took part in the demonstration. A striking feature was the large number of young people and women among the demonstrators and the enthusiasm they displayed. Representatives of the workers' organizations spoke at nearly all the meetings. Members of the local intelligentsia took part in the demonstrations in a large number of places.

The Polish Socialist Party's *Dzennik Ludowy* described the great impression produced by the attitude of the troops to the demonstrators: they answered the demonstration of sympathy towards them on the part of the peasants by saluting.

The representatives of the "Stronitz-

two Ludowe" and the workers' organizations declared themselves against Sanacja fascism, against the National-Democrats, in favor of democracy, of the solidarity and cooperation of the peasants with the workers by hand and brain. The resolutions adopted at the peasant meetings expressed the anti-fascist feelings of the masses and demanded the rapid carrying into effect the resolution of the Cracow Congress.

"Unanimity and determination in conjunction with restraint and discipline were a striking feature of all the demonstrations," wrote the *Polonia*.

In Tarnow, for example, the streets all along the route of the procession of 30,000 peasants, were filled with workers who created an atmosphere of warm sympathy for the peasants. In Bochnia, where 30,000 people also took part in the demonstration, cheers were raised by the demonstrators in honor of "absent friends" (that is, Witos and other officials of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" in exile) and demands were made for the immediate carrying out of the resolution of the peasant Congress.

The *Warszawski Dziennik Narodowy* (June 9, 1938) published a message from Fortszin which ran: "The peasants cheered the People's Front and Red Spain." Another message from Tarnow in the same paper ran: "There were plenty of banners, moreover, with inscriptions of a Communist character." Messages from local correspondents of the *Seloni Shtandar* again and again emphasized the "readiness for action."

The day did not pass off without a number of clashes with the National-Democrats, who are the sworn enemies of the members of the "Ludowe." The *Rabotnik* reported clashes in Blina, in the province of Posen, and in Jasslo, where the peasant militia drove off National-Democratic students who made an attack on the demonstrators. More serious clashes with the National-Democrats occurred in Bogdanow, also in the province of Posen, and there were clashes in some places in the provinces of Keletzk, Lub-

lin and Cracow. Maria Sowina, a member of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe," very aptly summed up the attitude of the National-Democrats to the peasant movement at the congress in February:

"The National-Democrats," she said, "are creating a racial doctrine, and we shall see one day that they will turn against us, the peasants . . . for they are Junkers who are startled to find that the peasant has realized who it is that provides food for the people, who it is that is the defender of his country."

The meetings and demonstrations on June 5 and 6 were a glorious proof of the readiness of wide sections of the Polish peasants to struggle for the soil, for peace, freedom and democracy.

During the discussion at the Congress of the "Stronitztwo Ludowe" one delegate, Guiski, expressed his regret that the "central authorities of the workers' organizations had not shown sufficient determination in the question of common action at the time of the August strike."

This is an extremely severe, but unfortunately perfectly justified, indictment. The Right-wing leaders of the Polish Socialist Party prevented the organization of a general strike of the workers in support of the peasant strike, and the strike was drowned in blood by the Pilsudski gang. In certain cases the demonstrations of the workers were thwarted by masked agents of fascism, who had insinuated themselves into the Polish workers' organizations.

This fact must be taken into consideration and remedied by the Polish Communists, who are unreservedly devoted to the cause of the liberation of the workers of Poland, and also by honest anti-fascists in the ranks of the Polish Socialist Party and other workers' organizations.

When it is, the mighty movement of the toiling masses in town and country, led by the proletariat, will sweep the hated fascist regime from the face of the Polish landscape and establish a free people's Poland.

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## Chronicle of Events

### THE JAPANESE WARMONGERS GET A THRASHING

**I**N THE Far East the gallant soldiers of the Red Army and the Soviet air-men have dealt the Japanese warmongers a blow that will be greeted as an act of liberation by friends of peace the whole world over. The blows which rattled on the Japanese militarists have hit the other partners of the war axis in Berlin and Rome. The scolding of the press-mouthpieces of Hitler and Mussolini is the best evidence that the resolute behavior of the Soviet Union has destroyed another plot against world peace.

Treaties and maps prove that the tract of Soviet territory that the Japanese militarists proposed to seize belongs without doubt to the Soviet Union. But the fascist robbers respect treaties only when they are backed up by the unshakable will to permit no infringement of them. That is the lesson which the events on the Far Eastern border of the Soviet Union will teach to all peaceful nations.

It was almost unanimously agreed by the press of democratic countries that the Soviet Union was in the right in carrying its point of view through and forcing the Japanese militarists to retreat. Even reactionary newspapers are unable to deny this although the kind of reports they made of the hostilities, the repetition of Japanese concoctions of lies show clearly that their sympathies were on the side of the Japanese aggressors. The *Temps* advised the Japanese to finish their war in China first and then gave itself up to vague accusations against the Soviet Union. Against these insolent insinuations *l'Humanité* took up an unequivocal position. The majority of French newspapers welcomed the firm

stand of the Soviet Union. The opinion of the Right-wing newspaper *Ordre* that the Soviet Union had not submitted to blackmail and had persisted in its firm stand is typical. None the less Leon Blum's articles in the *Populaire* will be noted because, to put it mildly, even now he can scarcely hide, behind philosophical observations on the possible consequences of the incidents in the Far East, his timidity at the aggressors.

Results have once again proved Leon Blum wrong. Instead of increasing the war danger the firm stand of the Soviet Union has led to discouragement of the Japanese aggressors, to doubts, even in Germany and Italy, in the strength of the war axis and to a new heartening of the friends of peace.

The English, even more decisively than the French press, have concluded that the Soviet Union is in the right although in England, too, a number of papers reprinted the disruptive lying reports of the Japanese militarists. A few conservative papers evinced malicious joy at the blows dealt to the Japanese war groups and hinted that Japan might now conduct itself with more good will towards the English capitalist interests in China. The English conservative paper *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post* spoke of a "great Moscow success" and the liberal *News Chronicle* declared that the conflict had proved that there was a limit to what aggressors might do. The *Economist* emphasized that other countries ought to take the attitude of the Soviet Union as an example. The fascist *Frankfurter Zeitung* reported with regret that English public opinion held Japan to be in the wrong. The English Labor newspaper the *Daily Herald*, having at first remained aloof, admitted that the disputed territory was not Japanese, that if it were not in the Soviet Union



it would be in China. And added that there was no law or treaty to justify the presence of Japanese troops.

The strange contrast to this declaration are the crocodile tears shed by this paper a few days later over the unavoidable victims of the defense action of the Soviet Union. These "pacifists" try to spread the idea that it does not pay to make these sacrifices for world peace and only wish to conceal from the mass of the people that the policy of retreat results in a thousand times more victims than timely and decisive resistance to the aggressor.

The cooperation of fascist aggressors is again clearly brought to light. Even before the Japanese militarists had begun their armed attack on the positions of the Soviet troops, the Berlin *Boersenzeitung* reported this in advance and spoke of a "demonstration" that Japan was about to make. But the fanfare became ludicrous. The Soviet Union defended itself successfully against provocation and all the howling of the Nazi press could not disguise the fact that the warmongers had received a mighty blow and that a great service had been rendered to the cause of world peace. It must be added that the Trotskyites again came out as lackeys of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo war axis. A Belgian Trotskyite sheet, for example, openly supported Japan. Its attitude could not be distinguished from that of the Nazi press.

People in England have every reason to be on the watch in the next few weeks. Concerning the resumption of diplomatic relations between England and Japan the *Times* wrote that Japan should take note of the position into which it had come through the annihilating blow which the Soviet Union had dealt the Japanese war groups. A few weeks ago the American press reported plans for a division of China into so-called spheres of influence and promising Shanghai and the lower Yangtse valley to England. The Japanese Finance Minister declared that Japan was ready to cooperate with other nations in exploiting China. The

City of London believes apparently that it can protect its own exploiting interests, at the expense of heroically struggling China, under the Japanese flag as well. In connection with the partial eclipse of the Japanese war group there are ever increasing reports of *Japanese economic difficulties* which deserve the highest interest and attention.

The longer the war of aggression in China drags on, the longer becomes the list of raw materials whose use to the private consumer in Japan is forbidden. At first it affected only cotton and wool, than followed nearly all kinds of leather and rubber. The last reports speak of a general ban which it is proposed to put on the use of petrol by private owners of cars. The Japanese press has arrogantly declared that Japan can dispense with cotton and wool and that these will be replaced entirely by synthetic yarns. But now there is already a scarcity of the wood which is essential to the production of these synthetic yarns. In the meantime this shortage had led to a notable decrease in the use of paper. In order to obtain raw materials necessary for continuing the war Japan has been forced to draw on its gold reserve.

Even the Nazi press can no longer deny Japan's increasing economic difficulties. The Berlin *Boersenzeitung* reported in a long article from Tokyo that Japan will now be forced to begin rationing foodstuffs. The paper continues: "Whereas in the first year of the war only rare and expensive goods came under control, now, in the second year, articles of daily use and cheap mass-produced goods will be included." The Japanese press openly admits that the ban on the use of cotton, leather, etc., for home consumption had thrown about a million independent small merchants and factors into the host of the unemployed, apart from the mass unemployment occasioned in heavy industry by the lack of raw materials.

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The Chinese people is arming itself with all its might for the defense of

Hankow. The Communist Party of China has made detailed suggestions to the Kuomintang government about the defense of Hankow and the mobilization of the whole Chinese people. The woman reporter of the Hitlerite *Frankfurter Zeitung* who was present in Hankow had to admit that the Japanese advance on Hankow had been brought to a standstill and the Chinese armies face the coming battles with confidence. There is a characteristic report from Hankow in the Hitlerite *Voelkischer Beobachter* in which it says: "One must wonder at how great China's armed power still is and for how long it will be able to strike and resist when it is thoroughly invested." The Japanese press hoped, from the planned removal of the Chinese Central government to Chungking, that Hankow would soon fall. This illusion has been shattered. The Chinese Central government has removed most of its civil service to Chungking in order the better to be able, from there, to mobilize the potential strength of the vast country. But at the same time the Chinese people is arming to defeat the Japanese aggressors before they get to Hankow. The last proclamation of Chiang Kai-shek points out Japan's weakness and summons the Chinese people to the struggle for final victory.

But it is not only on the Soviet frontier and not only in China that the aggressors have been disappointed.

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The offensive by the Spanish Republican Army has destroyed the hopes of German and Italian intervention of a speedy victory. Characteristic in this respect is a long article in the *Temps* which, as a zealous defender of the non-intervention farce, had counted on a quick victory for Franco, but now states that this victory has receded into the distance. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* says the same thing more carefully. The successes of the Spanish republican army are not only of strategical importance, they also influence public opinion in democratic countries.

We have English public opinion to thank that the Chamberlain government has not yet been able to do as Mussolini expected and bring into operation the Anglo-Italian agreement. On the contrary, the Chamberlain government has been obliged to protest, through its ambassador in Rome, against the continuance of Italian help for Franco and to point out that the Anglo-Italian agreement cannot be ratified as long as this support of Franco continues. The English representative mentioned at the same time that the French government, in closing the frontier at the Pyrenees, had made its contribution to "non-intervention." This cynical statement typifies the cooperation between the aggression of the fascist powers and the complaisance of the democratic countries which, without any guarantee whatsoever from the fascist countries, throttled the Spanish republic by embargo on the delivery of arms. Leon Blum, one of those primarily responsible for the farce of "non-intervention," has abandoned his pessimistic prophesies of the speedy end of the republic under the influence of the successes of the republican offensive. None the less he urges, in long articles in the *Populaire*, a so-called armistice for mediation between the republic and the fascist rebel bands of Hitler and Mussolini.

Comrade Diaz, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain, has sharply rejected Leon Blum's unsought advice and labeled it as an invitation to surrender. At the same time the last meeting of the National Committee of the Spanish Socialist Party shows that this organization is not minded to follow the suggestions of surrender made by certain leaders of the Second International but that it will continue to fight as before for the complete victory over fascist intervention and its mercenaries in Spain.

The reorganization of the government, undertaken by Negrin, testifies to the desire to centralize all defense forces under single leadership. In the course of intrigues plotted by certain questionable republicans and the Caballero fac-

tion against Negrin's government, encouraged by the agents of English reaction and supported by certain leaders of the Second International, a representative of the Catalanian and another of the Basque Republican Party have been removed from the government and in their place a Catalanian and a Basque Socialist have entered the government in order to carry into effect the determination of their peoples to fight more firmly than their predecessors. Even the greater part of the reactionary press of different countries has had to admit that the Negrin government has not been weakened by this reconstitution. It has freed itself from defeatists in order to push forward the struggle with unity and firmness.

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In Czechoslovakia also, the third focus of fascist aggression, the people's will to resist is strengthening. The more the Nazis press and the Henlein faction shout themselves hoarse in hysterical threats against the Czechoslovakian republic, the stronger becomes the determination of the masses in Czechoslovakia and of the brave workers in the Sudeten district. The Czechoslovak press in the last few weeks has clearly expressed its concern at certain Right elements in the Czechoslovak government which allow a good deal too much opportunity for the activities of the Henlein fascists. The attitude of these circles has not only emboldened the Henlein fascists to bloody acts of terrorism but also encouraged the other fascist factions among the minorities to make insolent demands. The Slovak Separatist Hlinka, just before he died, promised his accomplices among the Slovaks in America an early reunion in an independent Slovakia; the Hungarian fascists in Czechoslovakia carry high treason against the republic to such an extent that they follow Henlein's example and demand their own Hungarian army in Czechoslovakia. This has contributed to the fact that the masses in Czechoslovakia and the anti-fascist parties and

organizations among the minorities now demand a policy of firmness from the Czechoslovakian government. Dissatisfaction with Lord Runciman's supposed role as mediator grows continually stronger since he demonstrated in the first days of his mission that he would be very willing to sacrifice the sovereignty and existence of the Czechoslovak republic on the altar of an understanding between Hitler Germany and reactionary circles in England. The latest bait he has offered is the "cantonization" of Czechoslovakia, which, in the eyes of the Nazis, would mean the beginning of the end of the Czechoslovakian republic.

The determination of the Czechoslovak people and of the anti-fascist sections of the minorities to resist gives direction and goal to the *Manifesto* of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in which it is again emphatically stated that Czechoslovakia is neither a colony nor an English dominion and that the Czechoslovak people can maintain its independence and freedom if it remains true to the spirit of May 21 and prepares itself resolutely for the defense of the Czechoslovak republic.

In the meantime the great Conference of the International Peace Movement (I.P.C.) has met in Paris and directed the increased mobilization of peace forces in all lands against the inhuman, barbarous bombings of women and children in Spain and China, and against fascist aggression in general whether in Spain, China or Czechoslovakia.

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The development of internal affairs in the different countries exhibits during the past months new signs of increased tension.

In France the most noteworthy is Jouhaux's speech at the Congress of the Teachers' Union. Jouhaux declared that by late autumn France would be in a critical state, internally and financially. In presenting its demands, the C.G.T. should go to the government, not with an ultimatum but with a warning. As



in February, 1934, increased unity in action was the most immediate task. In *l'Humanite*, a secretary of the C.G.T., pointing out that the program of the People's Front was not being carried out by successive governments, made an appeal for a People's Front Congress in order to stimulate the People's Front. He declared that the Congress of the C.G.T. in Nantes would have to pay attention to this question. The machinations of French reaction make it a necessity to stimulate the People's Front by a People's Front Congress. While big business continued its sabotage of industry and financial circles sabotaged the settling of the wage demands of the civil servants and the introduction of old age pensions, Flandin, as Hitler's adjutant, furthered the campaign for virtual capitulation to the Third Reich and the arch-traitor Doriot went to fascist Spain in order to threaten from there a rising in France similar to that which Franco had plotted in Spain. The French government has so far not reacted to the energetic demands of the Left that Doriot should be put behind bolts and bars for his unconcealed treasonable plans against the French republic.

While in the C.G.T. the demand for strengthening the united front of the proletariat reaches ever stronger expression, the leadership of the Socialist Party has rejected the suggestion of the Communist Party that the fourth anniversary of the signing of the united front agreement should be celebrated by united demonstrations throughout the country.

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In England there has been a by-election in the Willesden constituency. The Conservative candidate was elected although he polled 9,600 votes less than at the last election. At the same time the Labor Party lost 3,000 votes. The relatively small poll is a further proof that the Labor Party by its refusal of the People's Front hinders that quickening of the Left which alone would have sufficient attraction to the voters to mo-

bilize the masses against the Chamberlain government.

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In Belgium the "Socialist leader" Spaak has done further grave injuries to the resolutions of his own party. In the past the Belgian Labor Party has repeatedly stated that a recognition of Franco by the government would be a serious taint. In the meantime, Spaak has sent a diplomatic agent to Franco and in the same time it was disclosed in Parliament that the Belgian government has begun to fortify the Belgian-French frontier. Spaak was the chief instigator of the conference of the so-called Oslo states which in effect would be the death of the League of Nations. How far Spaak's reactionary influence prevails in the leadership of the Belgian Labor Party is also proved by the renewed refusal of the united front proposal, made by the Communist Party of Belgium to the Belgian Labor Party on the occasion of its campaign of aid for Spain.

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In Switzerland the Communist Party has addressed a manifesto to the Swiss people calling for a united front against the reactionary policy of the Federal Council. The Swiss Social-Democrats have none the less refused to cooperate with the Communist Party in mobilizing the masses. This refusal cannot do away with the fact that the proclamation of the Swiss Communist Party expressed a general need. Proof of this is the comment of the liberal press which considers accurate the Communist Party's sharp criticism of the policy of the reactionary Federal Council.

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In Italy the embarrassment of the fascist authorities increases. In his attempt always to offer the Italian people some new attraction to take their minds off their economic and cultural needs, Mussolini has now done some intellectual borrowings from Rosenberg and has introduced duty-free into Italy the whole masquerade of the race theory. Fari-

nacci, in his *Regime Fascista*, has for a long time tried to put through in Italy the barbarous methods of persecuting the Jews. The industrious professors of the fascist regime have provided the race mania with an Italian fascist foundation, so to speak, and the government officials, especially the fascist militia, have received orders to use the necessary pressure to graft on to the Italian people this entirely alien race-raving of German fascism. Even the Pope has cried out at the plan and in a clear speech has deplored this mimicry of the Third Reich and warned the fascist authorities against carrying out a further attack on Catholic Action. Mussolini has declared in a speech that he will go through with the race idea to the end.

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In Germany war preparations have been feverishly speeded up. The mobilization of reserves for the proposed attack on Czechoslovakia, the building of fortifications to back up aggression, wage-cuts in the arms industry and growing epidemics of illness among the workers and an ever-increasing number of desertions from the army describe the situation. The collapse of stocks on the Berlin Stock Exchange clearly shows the difficulties of fascist industry. The final expression of present-day Germany as a prison state, made by the fascist authorities themselves, was given by the recent introduction of so-called cards of

identification, practically compulsory for the whole population. The identity card bears, as a civilized innovation, the finger-prints of its owner, whereby it is officially certified to the German people that their officials place them on the same level as professional criminals.

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In Poland the great Peasant Assembly of August 15 was the center of attraction. One million and a half peasants and adherents of other opposition parties took part in the demonstrations at two hundred places in Poland. Workers who belong to the Polish Socialist Party and Catholic Democrats marched together with the peasants supporting the demand for democratic elections and alterations to the Constitution. The organ of the Peasants' Party attacked, in stern language, the government's policy which shows no inclination to fall in with the demands of the mass of the peasants and workers, questions of communal self-government, and the reform of the franchise. The government camp attempts on the one side to broaden its basis by negotiations with the Peasants' Party, without however, being ready to grant any fundamental concessions. The reactionary fascist camp expressed in their press more definitely than before that they regarded the imitation of the totalitarian methods of Germany and Italy as a prerequisite to any cooperation with the governing faction.



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